ERASMUS

PRESERVED SMITH

ERASMUS

DESIDERIUS ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM

Sketch made by Albert Dürer in 1520. Original in Bonnat Collection at Paris

ERASMUS

A Study of His Life, Ideals and Place in History

By

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Illustrated

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E R A S M U S

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First Edition
E-Z

TO
MY WIFE
WITH LOVE AND HOMAGE

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PREFACE

PERHAPS the best way to explain the *raison d'être* of this work is to set forth the phases through which the composition has passed. Lectures given at Amherst College in the winter of 1912–13 laid the foundations. At that time I was attracted to the subject by the large amount of new materials which had appeared very recently. The masterly edition of the epistles by Percy Stafford Allen and the publication of many unknown or inaccessible letters by J. Förstemann, O. Günther, L. K. Enthoven, and other scholars, have greatly added to our knowledge of Erasmus's life. The *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, now in course of publication, has opened a mine of information on many of the humanist's works. On various phases of his career and genius much new light has been cast by the labors of Kalkoff, Mestwerdt, Humbert, Zickendraht, Woodward, and Nichols.

Under the pressure of other labors the biography was laid aside for several years. When I took it up again, and studied it more deeply, I discovered in Erasmus the champion, in his own day, of that "undogmatic Christianity" now first coming to its own four hundred years after he proclaimed it. One must not exaggerate, nor wrench historical facts to preconceived ideas; it would be impossible to claim that the humanist felt toward dogma and ritual exactly as the most rational Christian at present feels. Nevertheless, it is true that, relatively, he neglected doctrine and ceremony and placed the emphasis on the ethical and the reasonable. His peculiar note, much more striking then than it would be now, was to reconcile the claims of piety with those of reason, to discountenance obscurantism, while cherishing morality. No writer before

Voltaire has left behind him such a wreck of superstitions; few writers since the last Evangelists have bequeathed to posterity so much of ethical value. It is this combination of reason and morality in religion that makes Erasmus the forerunner and exponent of that type of Christianity at present prevalent among large circles of our cultivated classes.

When I gave the manuscript its third and final revision, I had recently written a larger history of the Reformation and had given much thought to the various philosophical problems connected with it, among which none is deeper or more difficult than that of the relation of the Reformation to the Renaissance. Were the two opposed or allied movements? Why did the humanists after preparing the way for the Reformers, turn against them? I soon learned that the life of Erasmus would cast more light upon this problem than that of any other man, for he typified and represented, more than did any other man, the evolution of humanism in its contact with the Reformation; first he prepared the way for it, then he welcomed it, and finally repudiated it. A solution of the problem why he did this, and to some extent of the larger problem of the contact of the two movements, is here presented. Furthermore, Erasmus's particular task, that of synthesizing the two diverse currents flowing from Christian and from pagan antiquity, is freshly evaluated.

In fine, three tasks have been here attempted—first, to sum up many new facts and details on the life of Erasmus; secondly, to exhibit the genius of his rational piety; and thirdly, to explain, by the example of his career, the intricate relations of Renaissance and Reformation.

My obligations to helpers have been very great. I am indebted to Dr. P. S. Allen for occasional information and for keeping me *au courant* of his own work; to that generous patron of learning, Mr. George Arthur Plimpton, for the use of his splendid library of rare

books, including some valuable Erasmiana; to Prof. H. Carrington Lancaster, for transcribing for me some letters from the *Bellaria Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami et Ambrosii Palargi*, published at Cologne, 1539, out of the copy of that rare work at the Bodleian. For information about a manuscript containing unpublished Erasmus letters at Nîmes I am obliged to Prof. John Lawrence Gerig. Still more do I owe to Prof. Louise Ropes Loomis. At one time I hoped to secure her co-operation in writing this volume, but, though the work was in her possession for about a year, she found little time to devote to it, and actually wrote only some eight or ten pages. As she built on my work, and as I have in turn remodeled hers, it is impossible to indicate her contribution more exactly than to state that most of what is said on the *Adages* in Chapter II is from her pen. She has also recently read the first half of the manuscript and has given me the benefit of many corrections and suggestions in matters of detail. Most of all, perhaps, the book owes to the thorough revision of Prof. George Lincoln Burr. Every chapter now bears the mark of his profound erudition and keen insight. My wife has also assisted me in reading the proof, and has also prepared the index. The merits of the book are due to the co-operation of the kind friends here warmly but inadequately thanked; for its faults, as well as for the expression of opinion, I alone bear the responsibility.

PRESERVED SMITH.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
July 6, 1922

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

Allen—*Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami denuo recognitum et auctum per* P. S. Allen. As yet 4 vols. 1906 ff.

Enthoven—*Briefe an Desiderius Erasmus von Rotterdam*, hg. von L. K. Enthoven. 1906.

Epistolæ ad Amerbachium—*Epistolæ familiares Des. Erasmi Roterodami ad Bonif. Amerbachium.* 1779.

Förstemann-Günther—*Briefe an Desiderius Erasmus von Rotterdam*, hg. von. J. Förstemann und O. Günther. 1904.

LB.—*Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami Opera omnia*, ed. J. Clericus. 10 vols. Lugduni Batavorum. 1703-06. The epistles are quoted from vol. 3 by number of epistle only; other volumes are quoted by number of volume and column.

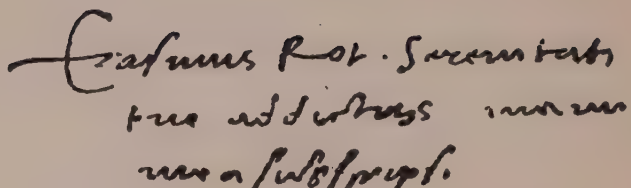
L.C.—*Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters*, translated and edited by Preserved Smith. Vol. 1, 1913. Vol. 2, in collaboration with C. M. Jacobs, 1918.

Lond.—*Epistolarum Des. Erasmi libri xxxi.* London. 1642.

Nichols.—*The Epistles of Erasmus. . . . English translations with a commentary . . .* by F. M. Nichols. 3 vols. 1901-19. Though I add references to Nichols in the notes, I have always compared his version with the original.

Z.W.—*Huldreich Zwinglis sämtliche Werke*, hg. von E. Egli, G. Finsler, und W. Köhler, 1905 ff. As yet, vols. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, and parts of 4 and 9.

ERASMUS



Autograph signature to a letter to Duke George of Saxony, December 5, 1522. It reads: "Erasmus Rot. Serenitati tuae addictissimus manu mea subscripsi." Original in Dresden.

CHAPTER I

APPRENTICE YEARS

LIKE all great and complex movements, the Renaissance is capable of interpretation in various ways and from opposite standpoints. When we think of its importance in the preparation of our modern habit of mind, we are inclined to class it with the great epochs of advance, such as the Athenian Age and the Enlightenment. But if we take the testimony of its own writers we learn that its ideals were in the past, a restoration and not a progress. Its most enlightened champions appealed not to reason, but to the Roman poets; not to nature, but to classic authority. While the glorious freedom of thought attained by many of its representatives entitles it to be regarded as an insurgence of reason, its passionate rebellion against the rationalism of Aristotle and Aquinas forces us to consider it an artistic, emotional reaction against reason, like the Romantic Movement of the early nineteenth century.

Nor is there any consensus of opinion as to the relations of the Renaissance and the Reformation. For long they were regarded as sisters, similar in origin and analogous in result; emancipations both, in different fields and with different emphases but with a friendly alliance, so that the elder sister prepared for the younger and the younger consummated the work of the elder. But of late it has been asserted that the Reformation was a reaction of backward minds against the Renaissance; the different points of view of the two have been stressed, and their rivalry and even hostility pointed out. "Where the Reformation triumphed"—we may paraphrase a famous saying of Erasmus—"the Renais-

sance perished"; and contrariwise where humanism attained its perfect work the Lutheran gospel met with a cold reception.

A part of the confusion of thought on this subject is due to the lack of a precise understanding of what is meant by the term "Renaissance." Sometimes it is made to cover all the intellectual phenomena of the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, and even (as by Burckhardt) extended to the political development; again it is narrowly restricted to the rebirth of enthusiasm for classical antiquity. For the sake of clarity it should be pointed out that the vast change which came over the human spirit in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, marking the transition from mediæval to modern times, can be analyzed into at least three very distinct factors. In the first place, there was the Social Shift, manifesting itself in politics in the rise of the national state and in economics in the change from the gild system of production to the capitalistic method. Secondly, there was a large number of new Discoveries—geographical exploration, the invention of printing, gunpowder, glass lenses, and the compass, and the revival of natural science with Copernicus and his fellows. Thirdly, there was the Rebirth of Antiquity, manifesting itself, according to the view here set forth, in the Renaissance and in the Reformation. All three great lines of progress interacted, as for example, nationalism in the rise of vernacular literature, and the discovery of printing in the spread of culture, but each is separable in thought, and might conceivably have acted independently.

The Renaissance and the Reformation were, therefore, really one. The conscious opposition of the champions of each, the intense warfare arising from their propinquity and concern with the same interests, have concealed the real similarity of their natures, just as the warfare between Catholics and Protestants has greatly exaggerated the popular estimate of their differences

and obscured their numerous and fundamental agreements. Though both Renaissance and Reformation, by breaking down the old barriers and by stimulating new thought and claiming new freedoms, did much to prepare the modern world, both, as the first syllable of each name indicates, represented a turning back to the past, and to about the same period of the past, the first century of the vulgar era. Their opposition was a recrudescence of the great alignment of the first centuries of the Roman Empire; that between Christianity and paganism. Many of the Italian humanists repudiated the gospel in the name of the Greek and Roman poets and philosophers; most of the Reformers denounced or lamented the errors of the heathen and of their recent disciples. The versatile virtuosi of Italy longed for the return of that golden age when the Roman Capitol swayed a world of poetry and of sensual pleasure, when all made for the joy of living and the still greater joy of learning. The earnest Calvinist panted for the virtues and the faith of an apostolic age.

But, before Luther as after him, there were men, particularly among the serious-minded scholars of the North, who felt the need of amalgamating both streams of influence, the Latin and the Judæan. Splendid was the heritage of the classic poets and philosophers; precious was the message of the gospels; could not the two possessions, so different in spirit and in quality, be united in one rich synthesis, cleared from the rust and accretions of a thousand years, and turned to the profit of a new civilization? The solution of this problem was the task consciously and conscientiously set themselves by the Transalpine humanists; their success has been of high value to their own world and to ours, and their achievement, though like all great works the product of many minds, was due more to Erasmus than to any other one man. He cared little for the inventions and discoveries of his age; he was not even aware of the significance of the main economic and political changes;

but he does represent, better than any other one man, the common spirit of the Renaissance and of the Reformation. His own life typifies their similar origin and their final divergence.

As the task of reconciling the streams of ancient culture flowing from Judæa and from Athens was universal, it was fitting, perhaps necessary, that its master should have been born in the most cosmopolitan of European states. In the fifteenth century the Netherlands supplied the exchange and *entrepôt* not only of merchandise, but of ideas. Italian goods, material and spiritual, floated down the Rhine; those of England were borne across the North Sea; those of Germany and France were close at hand. In this focus arose a man who wrote, "I wish to be called a citizen of the world, the common friend of all states, or, rather, a sojourner in all."[1] "That you are very patriotic," he said to a French friend, "will be praised by some and easily forgiven by everyone; but in my opinion it is more philosophic to treat men and things as though we held this world the common fatherland of all."[2] Significant it seemed to him that he was born "between the banks of the Rhine"—that is, in the delta, as though he were intended to share the culture of the two great bordering states. For at that time the Dutch did not think of themselves as a separate nation; half of the Burgundian state was German, the other half French, and those persons born near the frontier might choose to which of the two nations they belonged. Erasmus preferred now one and now the other country,[3] but did not care to decide the matter finally, for, as he wrote:[4]

I should like not only France and Germany, but all countries and all cities to claim Erasmus; for it would be a useful emulation which would stimulate many to noble deeds. Whether I am a

[1] To Zwingli, September 5 ("5 nonas Septembres") 1522; Z. W. vii, ep. 235.
[2] To Budé, Allen, ep. 480.
[3] LB. x, 1662; LB. ep. 803; Lond. xii, 43.
[4] To Peter Manius, October 1, 1520, Allen, ep. 1147.

Batavian I am not sure. I cannot deny that I am a Hollander by birth, from that part, if one may trust the maps, which borders on France rather than on Germany, but assuredly from the region situated on the frontiers of France and Germany.

But though the name Holland applied not to a nation, as in common speech it does now, but merely to a province, Erasmus loved it well. If at times he expressed discontent with a country which appreciated its own son less than did other nations, elsewhere he praised highly its rich soil, its hardy fishermen, its numerous, wealthy, and cultured cities, and the humane and intelligent character of the inhabitants.[1] Holland was then a part of the Burgundian state, welded into a powerful land by Philip the Good and Charles the Bold, but with little of the national feeling already characteristic of the French, the English, and the Germans. About his birth and childhood in this country Erasmus in after-life wove a web of romance founded on fact, which may be here repeated after him.

During the last years of Duke Philip the Good there lived at Gouda, a town about twelve miles from Rotterdam, a man named Elias.[2] The Dutch at that time had no family names, but took their surnames either from the baptismal name of their fathers, or from the town where they were born or with which they were later connected. Thus Adrian of Utrecht, who became pope in 1522, was called after the city of his birth and, occasionally, Rogers, a patronymic. Elias and his wife, Catharine, had ten sons, of whom the youngest save one, and the most gifted, was called Gerard, "the Beloved." With a natural aptitude for learning he

[1] "Auris Batava," *Adagia*, LB. i, 1083 f. *Cf.* L. Enthoven: "Erasmus Weltbürger oder Patriot?" *Neue Jahrbücher für das Klassische Altertum*, etc., xxix, 205.

[2] On Erasmus's parents and early life, Allen, i, 46 ff and ep. 447; Nichols, i, pp. 5 ff, and ep. 443. Erasmus hated his uncles, who dealt as hardly with him as they had done with his father. One of them tried to rob him of a shirt. Allen, ep. 76. On the Dutch lack of family names, L. Pastor: *History of the Popes*, tr. by B. F. Kerr, ix, 34; N. Paulus: *Die Deutschen Dominikaner im Kampfe gegen Luther*, 1906, p. 68.

acquired a mastery of Latin and also, we are told, of Greek, a language still almost unknown north of the Alps, which he probably picked up during a sojourn in Italy. His attainments marked him out as the object of his brothers' envy, and they conspired against him like another Joseph. Being unable to sell him to the Midianites, they desired to make him a priest, in order thus, as they hoped, to deprive him of his share in the family inheritance. Under their pressure, Gerard took holy orders.

Before his ordination,[1] the young man entered into a liaison with a widow named Margaret, the daughter of a physician in the neighboring village of Zevenberghen. The pair had two sons, Peter, born when his parents were both about twenty-five years old, and Erasmus, three years younger. Not long before the birth of his second son Gerard deserted his mistress, perhaps on account of further persecution by his family, and went to Rome. In this polished but corrupt city, then under the rule of Paul II, he led a dissipated life, supporting himself by copying manuscripts, and sent his parents a letter with a picture of two clasped hands and the words, "Farewell, I shall never see you more." However, he later decided to return, perhaps in consequence of a letter from his family containing the false news that Margaret was dead. After his home-coming he took care of his children, but did not, apparently, live with their mother any longer.[2]

Soon after he had taken orders, probably, and perhaps

[1] In January, 1506, on account of his illegitimate birth, Erasmus got a dispensation from the pope to hold benefices. He there is described as born "of a bachelor and widow," which would dispose of the idea that he was the son of a priest, were it not that he was obliged later to get a second dispensation (1517) in which his *defectus natalium* is said to be that he was "born of an illicit and, as he fears, of an incestuous and damned union." This would imply that in the interval he had learned something more about his birth, and also that he was himself uncertain of its details.—Allen, iii, p. xxix, and ep. 518. Erasmus was probably born after his father was ordained.

[2] Charles Reade's great novel, *The Cloister and the Hearth*, is founded on the adventures of Gerard.

during his absence, his second son was born and given the then common name of Erasmus, chosen, possibly, as a Greek rendering of his father's name. A little house in Nieuw-Kerk Street in Rotterdam bears the inscription saying that in it was born the great Erasmus, and this location may be considered the most likely one, though it is not altogether beyond doubt. Margaret may have gone there to hide her shame or, according to an early tradition, have been sent there by Gerard to conceal his sin.[1]

Erasmus always celebrated the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude (October 28th) as his birthday, but as to the year his accounts vary strangely. Several indirect references[2]—such as the statement that he met Colet when they were both just thirty (1499) and that he was fourteen years old when he left Deventer (1484)—point to the year 1469 as the one he had in mind, and that this is the true year is confirmed by early local tradition.[3]

[1] This house was shown to visitors as the birthplace of Erasmus as early as 1540.—Brown: *Calendar of State Papers, Venice*, v, 222. In 1591 Fynes Moryson visited the house, and also noted that the wooden statue of Erasmus had been broken down by the Spanish soldiers in the Dutch war of independence. See his *Itinerary*, ed. 1907, pp. 107 ff. Cornelius Loos, a Dutchman who lived a little later, relates that the stone statue of Erasmus was erected after the Rotterdam fire of 1563, and was destroyed by Spanish soldiers in 1572. On the place of Erasmus's birth he says: "If we may credit the tradition of the fathers in these parts, his father was a parish priest in the neighborhood of Gouda, who in order to conceal his crime sent his pregnant servant to a neighboring city."—Cornelius Loos: *Illustrium Germaniæ Scriptorum Catalogus*, 1582, *s. v.* "Erasmus" (no paging). A copy of this rare book is at Cornell. Against this, however, may be placed a long MS. note to a written extract from Loos, now found in the town library of Gouda. The writer of this is unknown, but he declares that Erasmus's friend, Regner Snoy, had often heard Erasmus say that he was born at Gouda. This printed in *Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis*, xvi, 1845, p. 232. The fact that Erasmus took the surname "Roterodamus," however, shows that he regarded himself as a citizen of Rotterdam. J. Milton speaks of a *bronze* statue of Erasmus at Rotterdam. *Defensio II pro Populo Anglicano, Works*, 1805, v, 299.

[2] LB. i, 921 f; viii, 561; Allen, ep. 940; and perhaps his speaking of his schooling at the age of thirteen, LB. ix, 810A. Furthermore, he says that he wrote his first epistle (Allen, ep. 1, put in 1484) when he was fourteen; see Allen, ep. 447, and LB. i, 347.

[3] Cornelius Loos, *loc. cit.* This date is apparently accepted by the unknown annotator on Loos, cited above.

But of twenty-three direct references to his age the first (made in 1506) gives the year 1466; the next two (made in 1516) give 1467; the next twelve (made during the years 1517–24) indicate 1466; and the last eight (made during the years 1525–34) point to 1464. In other words, the older he became the earlier he put the year of his birth. It has been suggested, with much plausibility,[1] that, whereas he knew the true year of his birth to be 1469, he made himself appear older in order to save the reputation of his father and to make it easier to get for himself certain ecclesiastical dispensations. At that time the union of a priest with a woman was considered a greater sin than the union of two unmarried lay persons, and the illegitimate child suffered under a heavier stigma. If Erasmus could make himself and his contemporaries believe that he had been born before his father took orders, he would have a powerful motive to do so. When he selected the year 1466 he may have appropriated the birth year of his brother, who was just three years older than himself.[2]

The boy's education began in his fifth year at the school of a certain Peter Winckel of Gouda. The studies were chiefly reading and writing Dutch, an unattractive sort of learning in which he made slow progress. About 1475 he was transferred to the famous school at Deventer. Both his parents died, probably of the plague, his mother in 1483, his father the following year. His mother had accompanied him to Deventer. His father left a small property, consisting partly of the valuable manuscripts he had copied, which was divided between the orphan boys. It was perhaps at some time during the school year at Deventer that Erasmus was withdrawn for a time and sent to the

[1] P. Mestwerdt: *Die Anfänge des Erasmus*, 1917, pp. 178 ff. Several lists of references made by Erasmus to his age have been drawn up; the fullest will be found in Appendix I to this book.

[2] In like manner Napoleon gave himself the birthday of his older brother in his marriage contract with Josephine.

Cathedral school at Utrecht, where he was a chorister. He does not seem to have kept up his music in later life.

Deventer had been a notable school for a century, having been founded in 1380 by Gerard Groot, the mystic who started the religious societies known as the Brethren of the Common Life. True to the traditions of its inception, the school emphasized religion, even encouraging the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue as well as in Latin. Among its many famous graduates were Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa and Thomas à Kempis, the probable author of *The Imitation of Christ.* At the time Erasmus entered it, the connection of the school with the Brethren of the Common Life was still organic, for the rector of that order, Egmond Ter Beek, was headmaster of the Florentius House there until his death in 1483. It is barely possible that he was the pedagogue spoken of by Erasmus as "both by name and nature a driveling ram."[1] There was also a master in the school who, in order to have an excuse for whipping the boy, trumped up a false charge against him, by which he almost broke his pupil's heart, brought on an attack of ague, and nearly dissipated his love of learning.

The life of a poor schoolboy was, indeed, not an easy one. The memoirs of Butzbach and Platter tell how they were used as fags by the older boys, forced to beg, starved, beaten, scolded, and otherwise brutally abused both by their seniors and by the masters. At Deventer there was perhaps less whipping than elsewhere. The boys paid fines for speaking Dutch and for other breaches of the rules. They were encouraged to spy on one another and on the younger masters. The day was completely filled with a routine of appointed task,

[1] This passage from the *Adages* quoted by Allen, i, p. 579. The word "Beek" is near enough to the Dutch bok (he-goat, or ram) to make the identification with the Κριομύξος barely possible. On the other hand, "Beek" means river in Dutch, and is so used by Erasmus in his epigram on the death of Arnold Beka's daughter.—LB. i, 1219.

meal time and exercise, from four in the morning, when they rose, until eight or nine at night.[1]

Deventer was one of the largest schools. A little later it provided instruction for 2,200 boys. There were eight forms, each of which must have had an average of 275 pupils. The boys sat on the floor around the master, who dictated to them a Latin text, translated and commented on it, and heard them construe and parse yesterday's lesson. The principal study of the nine years at this school was Latin, though, as Erasmus assures us, "it was still barbarous. The *Pater meus* and the *Tempora* were read aloud to the boys, and the grammars of Eberard and John Garland were dictated to them." The *Pater meus* was an exercise book with paradigms of the declensions, the *Tempora* a similar manual for the conjugations. John Garland was a thirteenth-century Englishman who had taught at Toulouse. His books were filled with riddling verses, such as

> Latrat et amittit, humilis, vilis, negat, heret:
> Est celeste Canis sidus, in amne natat.

The answer is a dog, which barks, and loses ("dog" being the name of the lowest throw at dice), is humble, vile, denies like an apostate ("a dog returned to its vomit"), adheres; is the Dog Star, and swims (the dogfish). "Heavens!" exclaims Erasmus, "what a time that was when the couplets of John Garland were read out to the boys, accompanied by a prolix commentary! A great part of the school was employed in dictating, repeating, and saying by heart some silly verses."[2]

Other books used were the *Floretus*, a sort of abstruse catechism, the *Cornutus*, a treatise on synonyms, the grammatical works of Papias and Huguitio, and a

[1] Allen: "A Sixteenth-century School," *English Historical Review*, x, 738 (1895).

[2] *De pueris instituendis*, LB. i, 514F. Allen: *The Age of Erasmus*, 35 ff; Woodward: *Erasmus Concerning the Aim and Method of Education*, p. 102. *Catalogus van den Incunabelen in de Atheneum-Bibliothek to Deventer.* Door M. E. Kronenberg, 1917.

dictionary called the *Catholicon*. All these were written in Latin, and in a Latin of an almost inconceivably obscure and difficult type. The *Catholicon*, by John Balbus, was one of the very first books to be printed, in an edition dated 1460, by Gutenberg at Mainz. It was an important work in its time, being the first dictionary arranged on the alphabetical principle. Former works had grouped the words according to their roots, or supposed derivations. These were often of the most fanciful kind; thus *hirundo* (swallow) was derived from *aer*, because it lived in the air; and *ovis* from *offero*, because sheep were offered in sacrifice; *nix* from *nubes*, because snow comes from a cloud. One of these derivations has become proverbial, that of Papias, "lucus a non lucendo," because "a grove lacks light (lux) and is therefore called, antiphrastically, lucus."

The date of the beginning of Erasmus's schooling is fixed by his remark that he was at Deventer when Pope Sixtus IV proclaimed a jubilee (1475). He was still there in April, 1484, when Rudolph Agricola, a famous humanist, visited the school, and Erasmus was presented to him as the head pupil, and perhaps read a prize poem. It is possible that the verses have been preserved; if they are the ones beginning "Pamphilus insano Galateæ captus amore." They are a *chaudfroid* of Vergilian phrases, and yet they may contain a kernel of genuine personal reminiscence, some calf love not otherwise known. The reason for thinking this is that Pamphilus is a name almost synonymous with Erasmus, and is used as a pseudonym by him elsewhere. In one of his *Colloquies*, first published in 1523, Erasmus recounts a love passage between Pamphilus and Maria, in which the girl is cruel, the suitor despérate.[1]

Shortly before Erasmus left Deventer the school was given "a breath of better learning" by John Sintheim,

[1] LB. i, 692 ff. Ruelens: "Notice sur la jeunesse et les premiers travaux d'Érasme," in *Erasmi Roterodami Silva Carminum, réproduction photo-lithographique*, 1864. On Agricola's visit, Allen, i, p. 2. Pamphilus was also the name of one of the story-tellers in Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

an excellent master and a humanist, who is said to have prophesied Erasmus's future greatness.[1] At the death of his father, probably in 1484, the boy was left in charge of guardians, one of whom was the pedagogue of Gouda, Peter Winckel. Erasmus's first extant letter was written at this period, advising his guardian to sell the books left by Gerard. The man returned it with the sarcastic comment that epistles written in such stilted Latin should be accompanied by a commentary.[2] Both the sons of Gerard tried to persuade their guardians to send them to a university, whereas these gentlemen advised them, on the contrary, to enter a cloister. A temporary compromise was effected by which the boys were allowed to pursue their studies in another school of the Brothers of the Common Life at 'S Hertogenbosch, until October, 1486.[3]

Erasmus's later observation that he was a dull pupil is to some extent borne out by the fact that he took eight years to cover at Deventer the curriculum passed by Butzbach in two years.[4] But by the time he got to 'S Hertogenbosch he was far in advance of his masters, who, recognizing his excellence, asked him to make an epitome, for school use, of Lorenzo Valla's excellent textbook of style, the *Elegancies of Latin*.[5] In later life he represented the influences of the school as excessively monastic, a charge which he then greatly exaggerated, owing to his increased dislike of monasticism. As a matter of fact it is known that the Brethren of the Common Life did not urge, nor even allow, their pupils to become regular canons, and that Egbert Ter Beek, rector of the Florentius House at Deventer, opposed the plan of Nicholas of Cusa to guide boys into a monastic career.[6]

[1] Allen, i, p. 57.
[2] Allen, ep. 1, and ii, p. 245. *De conscribendis epistolis*, LB. i, 347E.
[3] Rather than 1487, as Mr. Allen thinks.
[4] Mestwerdt: *Die Anfänge des Erasmus*, 1917, p. 202 f.
[5] LB. i, 1067; Ruelens, 5; *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, i, 152.
[6] Mestwerdt, 183, 131.

On the other hand, it is equally well known that the Brethren of the Common Life set great store by the humanities and did not forbid their pupils to read heathen authors. Not only by Agricola and Sintheim, but by most of his other masters, the promising boy would have been encouraged, according to the precepts of Gerard Groot, to read the ancient moral philosophers, particularly Seneca.[1] From them he would even have learned the first principles of textual criticism, for their constitutions prescribed the greatest care in securing correct manuscripts for copying, "lest we should burden our consciences by writing erroneous books."[2]

Returning to Gouda in the autumn of 1486, Peter and Erasmus found that the estate left by their father (whatever it may have been) had gone to waste, and that one guardian had died. The other again pressed his wards to enter the monastery. According to a much later account, a violent scene ensued, followed by a trial of gentler methods. A swarm of monks was introduced, one of whom painted a charming picture of the tranquillity of the cloister, another in a tragic vein magnified the perils of the world, while a third dwelt on the terrors of hell "as though there were no road from the cloister to the world below." Finally an old comrade, Cornelius, referred to by Erasmus as Canthelius (ass) practiced upon the boy's love of letters. These combined efforts finally succeeded. The brothers both entered the monastic life, though not both the same cloister. Peter chose the monastery at Sion near Delft. Erasmus wrote him an affectionate letter in 1487, and referred to him pleasantly in 1498, but later spoke of him in very bitter terms as a man given to dissipation. At his death in 1528 he felt no regrets.[3]

The monastery selected by Erasmus for himself was

[1] Mestwerdt, p. 97.

[2] Mestwerdt, p. 142.

[3] Allen, ep. 3. A "Petr. Roterodamus" matriculated at Cologne on September 12, 1522, who may have been Erasmus's brother. H. Keussen: *Die Matrikel der Universität Köln*, ii, 1919, p. 851.

the priory of Emmaus at Steyn, about a mile from Gouda; it had been founded in 1419 by a man who became its first prior, James, son of Gyrard, on lands given by John the Bastard of Blois. It belonged to the same congregation as did the cloister of Sion. The order was that of Augustinian Canons, not to be confused with the Augustinian Eremites, or Austin friars, to which Luther belonged. The order had originated among the canons of cathedral chapters, who had formed a loose association and taken the "rule of St. Augustine," so called, for the guide.[1] Erasmus had no real vocation for the monastic life. Nevertheless, he found in the cloister congenial friends, for one of whom, Servatius, later prior, he soon conceived a violent passion. His letters of this period to him and to another young monk are full of alternate rapture and despair, kisses and tears.[2]

He also found the leisure to pursue his darling studies. Indeed, he wrote an essay on *Contempt of the World*[3] to prove that the monastic career was of all the pleasantest and "most Epicurean." His warm enthusiasm for the pagan Latin writers shines through the copious references to them in his early correspondence. Many of them he mentions by name and characterizes. With a touch reminding us of his later pacifism he praises Ovid because "his pen is nowhere dipped in blood."[4] Seldom if ever quoting from the Bible, mentioning Augustine only once or twice, he yet evinces a high admiration for Jerome's letters, full, as they are, of

[1] *Kirchenlexicon*, ii, pp. 1829 ff. On Steyn, Allen, i, 585; Ruelens, 1 ff.

[2] Allen, epp. 17–30. His letter to Servatius excusing himself for having "been inclined to those pleasures, though never their slave," Allen, i, p. 567. July 8, 1514. The reading "inclinatus" is preferred by Allen; that of "inquinatus" is found in most MSS.

[3] *De Contemptu Mundi*, LB. v, 1257C. *Cf.* Allen, i, p. 18, and ep. 1194, and letter to a monk, October 27, 1527, LB. iii, col. 1024 f; Lond. xx, 18. Petrarch had written a *De Contemptu Mundi*, not known to Erasmus. Innocent III had also written a *De Contemptu Mundi, sive de miseria conditionis humanæ*, Migne *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 217, pp. 701-46. This had been printed several times before 1480, and may have been known to Erasmus.

[4] LB. iii, col. 1257BC.

Roman life, and couched in easy Latin. Among the more recent humanists he defends Agricola, Hegius, and Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pius II), whose letters, novels, and diaries disclose so much knowledge of the world and so much interesting information about it.

But of all the moderns the one to excite his enthusiasm to the highest pitch was Lorenzo Valla, whose influence on him was almost incalculable. As a stylist, a critic, an anticlerical, and an exponent of a completely undogmatic Christianity, the Dutchman was the Italian's truest disciple. For Valla was an incarnation of the intellectual Renaissance, a critic and iconoclast of the caliber almost of Voltaire, unparalleled as yet in modern Europe for the daring, acumen, force, irreverence, and brilliancy of his attacks on religion. True, Valla called himself a Christian, and probably without hypocrisy, but his ideal was of a purely moral, humanitarian religion, unhampered either by creed or by ritual. Interested in theology, of which he was a master, he insisted on the genuine old theology of the Gospel and the Fathers over against the spurious new scholasticism and asceticism. The old doctors of the church he compared to bees making honey, the newer to wasps stealing grain from others. In exposing the Donation of Constantine as a forgery he put into the hands of the Protestants who came after him one of their most trenchant weapons. Again, in his *Notes on the New Testament*, he pointed out the numerous errors in the Vulgate, then usually considered, as it was later officially declared to be, the authentic form of the Scriptures. In a work on the monastic life (*De Professione Religiosorum*) he called in question the worth of asceticism. In a dialogue "On Pleasure," one interlocutor, representing the Epicurean philosophy, maintains that a prostitute is a more useful member of society than is a nun. Valla's own opinions, represented neither by the Epicurean nor by his Christian opponent, but by the arbitrating Niccoli, cannot be characterized

as atheistic and hedonistic, but the very fact that he canvassed such ideas was significant of his free spirit. Moreover, he was intensely antipapal and anticlerical. In all things he was the spirit who eternally contradicts. Attracted not only by the brilliancy of his language, but by the cogency of his argument and the keenness of his criticism, Erasmus remained throughout life the disciple and in many respects the spiritual descendant of the Roman critic.[1] He had, while yet in school, paraphrased one of Valla's grammatical works which, on account of its attacks on Priscian and the mediæval grammarians, was treated as heretical by some monks.[2] Later in life he was to follow Valla in many a path of biblical exegesis and of metaphysical argument.

Not contenting himself with reading, Erasmus tirelessly practiced his pen. The language he always used was Latin, then the tongue of the Church, of diplomacy, of learning, and of the greater part of accessible literature. Few works of high merit had as yet been produced in any European vernacular; practically none in Dutch, and this narrowness of his native dialect doubtless led the aspiring author to select the language of Rome as the vehicle for his thoughts. He knew Dutch, of course, which came back to him on his deathbed, notwithstanding a life-long use of Latin in conversation as well as in writing; and he learned to speak a little French, English, and Italian while he was staying among those peoples. Nevertheless, his attitude to his mother tongue is strikingly conservative compared with that of Luther, Rabelais, and Skelton.[3]

[1] On Valla in general, P. Monnier: *Le Quattrocento*, 1908, i, 275 ff; Creighton: *History of the Papacy*, ii, 338 ff. E. Fueter: *Geschichte des neuren Historiographie*, 1911, pp. 38 f, 112 f., Mestwerdt, 50 ff. M. v. Wolff: *Lorenzo Valla, Sein Leben und Seine Werke*, 1893.

[2] Pastor: *History of the Popes*, tr. by Antrobus, i, 51.

[3] His use of Dutch at the last, Allen, i, 53 f. French, Allen, epp. 119, 124; Nichols, epp. 122, 113. German he says he did not know. Italian he refused to talk (LB. ep. 533, Lond. xiii, 43), but some words of that language and of English occur in his *De Pronunciatione*, and more rarely elsewhere—*e. g.*, the English word "sin" in the *Praise of Folly*.

It is unnecessary to review the various exercises written at this period, the elegiac verses, the epistles, the declamations, all of which are good, but none of which is remarkable. They all tell one tale—a passionate love of letters and the unceasing effort to become a master of style. The most elaborate of the pieces bears a title which might be given to them all, the *Antibarbari*.[1] It is an essay on the text of most of Erasmus's later works, the loveliness of "good letters," and the wickedness and grossness of the barbarians who opposed the children of light. In this work, and another like unto it, *The Conflict between Thalia and Barbarity*,[2] the author's satire is directed against the monks and pedagogues who neglect literature, the keen sarcasms reminding us of similar passages in the *Praise of Folly*.

In these works the author broached a question that exercised him much throughout life, namely that of the relation of culture to religion, and gave it the same answer now that he always gave it later, namely that though virtue and learning are not the same thing, yet they are not hostile, and may even be helpful to each other, as both are good. Christians have learned from the pagans almost all they know of the arts of peace and of war, as well as of writing, speech, poetry, and science. True, religion is the "best of things," but it is not the only good thing, and even it is helped by the truth discovered by the Greek philosophers, who, as Augustine said, "scintillated sparks of the immortal light."[3]

While at Steyn Erasmus dabbled in the art of painting. A letter written in 1488 speaks of some flowers that he had painted in a book. There is also a record of a picture of Christ on the cross, with the inscription, in

[1] LB. x, 1691. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, pp. 55–80. Allen, ep. 1110.

[2] First published in 1693. LB. i, 889 ff. There is a slight doubt as to its genuineness. *Cf. Bibliotheca Erasmiana, Colloquia.* It has been put in June, 1489, just after Erasmus's letter to Cornelius Gerard, Allen, ep. 23, but *cf.* Mestwerdt, 206 n. 6.

[3] On this Mestwerdt, 250, 260 ff.

Latin, "Desiderius Erasmus painted this long ago at Steyn." It belonged, at one time, to Cornelius Musius (1500–72), provost of the convent of St. Agatha at Delft. A painting of the crucifixion, a triptych, has long been known, and is now in America, which bears, on the shield of one of the soldiers, the words, "Erasmus P[inxit], 1501." This, however, is certainly not by Erasmus of Rotterdam. The inscription is barely legible and, if admitted, might apply either to the name of the person represented in the picture (St. Erasmus), or to some other painter with the same name. The painting is a fine one and bears some resemblance to a similar picture attributed to Dürer.[1]

The pen, rather than the brush, unlocked the gates of the house of fame for Erasmus, and also found him early employment. In those days all public men, as well as all governments, needed secretaries skilled in the learned tongue, to give intelligibility and elegance to their state papers. The young canon was offered, and accepted, such a position from the Bishop of Cambrai, Henry of Bergen, one of the bastards of John Labeo ("Thick-lips") of Bergen, who was reputed to have ten legitimate and thirty-six natural children. On April 25, 1492, probably not long after he had entered the service of the Bishop of Cambrai, Erasmus was ordained priest at Utrecht by Henry of Burgundy, bishop of the diocese.[2]

Next to nothing is known of the young man's life at the episcopal court. He speaks of having heard of the exploits of Albert, Duke of Saxony, the agent employed by Maximilian in subduing a rebellion in Holland. In 1489, after a long siege, Albert, aided by the party known as the Cods, took Amsterdam, and by 1492 pacified the whole province. The courageous but cruel

[1] Allen, ep. 16; Nichols, ep. 15; Maurice W. Brockwell: *Erasmus, Humanist and Painter*, 1918. (Privately printed.) The Dürer painting which it resembles is reproduced in *Klassiker der Kunst, Dürer*, p. 83.

[2] On Henry of Bergen, A. Walther: *Anfänge Karls V*, 1911, p. 18. On the ordination, Allen, i, p. 588; ii, p. 304.

soldier was much hated by the peasants, the poor "bread-and-cheese folk," as they called themselves, but their famous compatriot bore no rancor against the son of his country's enemy.[1]

As the Bishop of Cambrai stood in close relations with the young duke Philip, whose marriage with Joanna of Spain he celebrated at Brussels, October 21, 1496, Erasmus must have caught some glimpse of the gorgeous and polished Burgundian court. Of all this experience, however, nothing has come down to us. All that is known is that he continued his studies, becoming at this time especially attracted to Augustine, a taste which perhaps indicates a deeper interest in religion than he had hitherto shown.[2]

But the court was not a good place for study and the young scholar persisted in his desire to go to a university. His attention turned to Paris both because it was the oldest and most famous seat of learning north of the Alps, and because some of his comrades had studied there. In 1495 the opportunity to follow their example came to him.[3]

Had we been able to enter Paris with Erasmus we should have been struck first with the quaint, mediæval appearance of the town, the narrow, crooked streets, the low houses, the lack of drainage and of lights. But, notwithstanding the unfamiliar appearance of the streets and of the walls, we should soon have been able to convince ourselves that this was indeed the capital of France. Approaching from the north we should have seen a palace called the Louvre standing just outside the wall, though it is not the Louvre of to-day, which was built later. We should not have known the palace on the site of the later Bastille; but on the Île de la Cité, Notre Dame and the Sainte-Chapelle would be

[1] Letter to Duke George (Albert's son), July 31, 1520. Allen, ep. 1125.
[2] Horawitz: *Erasmus und Martin Lipsius*, p. 114.
[3] An "Erasm. de Rotterdamis, art. i, pauper," matriculated at Cologne on June 6, 1496, but this was not the great Erasmus. H. Keussen: *Die Matrikel der Universität Köln*, ii, 1919, p. 401.

conspicuous, while in the Latin Quarter, on the left bank of the Seine, the churches of St. Germain-des-Prés and St. Sulpice and the recently built abbey of Cluny would greet us. On the hill now crowned by the Pantheon then stood the church of Ste.-Généviève, but hard by was St.-Étienne-du-Mont, of which a portion remains exactly as it was. The Sorbonne and the various other colleges of the university were scattered around the same district, as they now are; that of Montaigu, inhabited by Erasmus, just north of Ste.-Généviève, on the site of the present library of that name.[1]

The University of Paris was, with the possible exceptions of Bologna and Salerno, the oldest and most famous in Europe. The most celebrated faculty at the university was that of theology, and it was in this that Erasmus matriculated. The course was of extraordinary length, occupying normally fifteen years, so that the rule that the recipient of the doctor's degree must be thirty-five years old was almost unnecessary. After four years of study devoted chiefly to the Bible, and two years on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, the candidate was admitted to his first theological degree, that of *baccalaureus ad biblia*. After this he was allowed to give certain lectures for three years until his promotion to *Sententiarius*, or *baccalaureus formatus*. After six years more of study and teaching he was at last allowed to take his doctorate.[2] The course was, in practice, greatly shortened in the case of older men, who were

[1] On the topography of old Paris, *cf.* the map in H. Rashdall: *History of Universities* (Oxford, 1895), i, 271. A number of old pictures at the Carnavalet Museum, Paris, give a vivid idea of the appearance of the city at various times in its history. See also: Grant Allen: *Paris*, pp. 52, 71. S. Reinach: "Ste. Généviève sur Notre Dame de Paris," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1922, pp. 257 ff, describes and reproduces a view of the Île de la Cité from a 15th-century MS., showing Ste.-Généviève as a gigantic figure kneeling on top of Notre Dame.

[2] Rashdall: *Universities*, i, 470 ff. It is interesting to compare the course in German universities. Luther, after about three years of special study, became *baccalaureus ad biblia* on March 9, 1509. After this he lectured three semesters on the *Sentences* and studied and perhaps lectured two years on the Bible, when he was admitted to the doctorate, October 12, 1512.

able to enter with what would now be called advanced standing. Erasmus, who matriculated in his twenty-sixth year, became bachelor of theology (*baccalaureus ad biblia*) apparently in April, 1498, after five semesters.

In preparation for this degree, he gave some sermons, and took a course in scholastic philosophy. This study, so deeply repugnant to Luther, aroused the mirth of the young Dutchman. Aquinas, in many respects the greatest of the schoolmen, was by this time little regarded, for his system, and the Realism which had flourished in the heyday of scholasticism, had since been superseded by Nominalism and the later philosophers, Occam, Biel, and Duns Scotus. The alignment was really different at the close of the Middle Ages from what it had been earlier. In the twelfth century the deepest questions of metaphysics had been mooted, for the implication of realism is pantheism; the implications of nominalism are materialism and individualism. In these latter days the dispute was not so much metaphysical as logical, a subtle sophistry engaged with the precise meanings of crabbed terms, and the defense of paradoxes. The disputants were intent rather on victory than on truth. The "modern" philosophy, as nominalism was then called, had been condemned by an edict of the Sorbonne in 1472, but had triumphed nine years later, when the edict was repealed. When Erasmus entered Paris, the Scotists were in power, being represented by the influential teachers John Tartaret and Thomas Bricot, and by the Franciscan preacher and reforming Vicar General, Oliver Maillard. The question most to the front at the time was the dogma of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, not yet officially adopted by the Church, but maintained in 1496 by the professors of the Sorbonne, whose opinions had but little less authority with the learned public than those of the Roman Curia.[1] Erasmus,

[1] A. Renaudet: *Préréforme et Humanisme à Paris*, 1916, *passim*. A. Renaudet: "Érasme," in *Revue Historique*, cxi, 238 ff, 1912. P. Feret: *La*

who often spoke of this dispute as one of the most barren, was brought into the atmosphere of debate by the writings of his friend Gaguin, whose *De intemeratæ Virginis conceptione* was first published at Paris in 1489 and afterward reprinted often, once at Deventer in 1494.[1]

Let us hear what Erasmus has to say about his studies in scholastic philosophy. He is writing, in August, 1497,[2] to his English friend and pupil, Thomas Grey:

> I, who have always been a primitive theologian, have begun of late to be a Scotist—a thing upon which you, too, if you love me, should pray the blessing of Heaven. We are so immersed in the dreams of your compatriot—for Scotus, who, like Homer of old, has been adopted by divers countries, is especially claimed by the English as their own—that we seem hardly able to wake up at the voice of Stentor. Then, you will say, are you writing this in your sleep? Hush, profane man! you know nothing of theological slumber. In our sleep we not only write, but slander and wench and get drunk. . . . I used to think the sleep of Epimenides the merest fable; now I cease to wonder at it, having myself had the like experience.

Erasmus then goes on to tell the story of Epimenides, an ancient Rip van Winkle who, one day, in a cave, while making many discoveries about instances and quiddities and formalities, fell into a sleep which lasted forty-seven years.

> For my part, I think Epimenides uncommonly fortunate in coming to himself even so late as he did, for most divines never wake up at all. . . . Look now, my Thomas, what do you suppose Epimenides dreamed of all these years? What else but those subtlest of subtleties of which the Scotists now boast? For I am ready to swear that Epimenides came to life again in Scotus. What if you saw

Faculté de Théologie à Paris. Vol. I, 1900. P. Delisle: *La Faculté de Théologie à Paris. Notices et Extraits des MSS. de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 1899, vol. xxxvi, pp. 325 ff. Workman: *Christian Thought to the Reformation*, 1911, p. 243. Bulæus: *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis a Carlo Magno ad nostra tempora*, 6 vols. 1665–73. H. Rashdall: *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol. I, 1895.

[1] *Bibliotheca Belgica, s. v.* Gaguin.

[2] Allen, ep. 64; Nichols, ep. 59.

Erasmus sit yawning among those cursed Scotists while Gryllard is lecturing from his lofty chair? If you observed his contracted brow, his staring eyes, his anxious face, you would say he was another man. They assert that the mysteries of this science cannot be comprehended by one who has any commerce with the Muses and Graces. . . . I do my best to speak nothing in true Latin, nothing elegant or witty, and I seem to make some progress. . . . Do not interpret what I have said as directed against theology itself, which, as you know, I always have singularly cultivated, but as jokes against the theologasters of our age, unsurpassed by any in the murkiness of their brains, in the barbarity of their speech, the stupidity of their natures, the thorniness of their doctrine, the harshness of their manners, the hypocrisy of their lives, the violence of their language, and the blackness of their hearts.

Erasmus never got over his contempt for Scotist subtleties. One of the men whom he knew at his College of Montaigu, who was, indeed, one of the heads of it in 1499, though he did not take his doctorate in theology until 1506, was the Scotchman, John Major. This scholar was much given to the sophistry Erasmus ridicules. One of his works was characterized by Melanchthon as follows: "Good heavens! What wagon loads of trifling! What pages he fills with disputes whether there can be horsiness without a horse, and whether the sea was salt when God made it." These specimens were no exaggerations. Major seriously discusses such questions as whether God could become an ox or an ass, if he chose, and whether John the Baptist's head, having been cut off, could be in more than one place at a time. Erasmus was thinking of works like these when, in *The Praise of Folly*, he spoke of the barren scholastic tastes of the Scotch, and brought up, for derision, the question, suggested by Major, as to whether God could have redeemed mankind in the form of an animal or a gourd.[1] It was such ridicule as this that turned the first name of Duns Scotus into a synonym for fool.

[1] Hume Brown: *Surveys of Scottish History*, 1919, p. 127. On Major, Godet: *Collège de Montaigu*, 1912, 1 f; A. Clerval: *Régistre des Procès-Verbaux de la Faculté de Théologie de Paris*, 1917, p. 5.

Erasmus began to lecture, presumably on the Bible, shortly after receiving his degree of *baccalaureus ad biblia*. One young man, who heard him about 1498, wrote thirty years later how much he had then admired his teacher's learning and modesty, his attainments in Latin, Greek, philosophy, and theology, his ardor in teaching, his candor in writing, and his piety.[1] This pupil was Hector Boece, a young Scotchman, later the first principal of King's College, Aberdeen. Erasmus returned the affection and dedicated to him one of his first published writings, a short poem on *The Hovel where Jesus was Born*.[2]

Like Oxford and Cambridge, the University of Paris was divided into colleges, originally dormitories for poor students, in which instruction was given by tutors. The college entered by Erasmus was that of Montaigu, which, having been founded by Gilles Aycelin de Montaigu, Archbishop of Rouen, in 1314, had fallen into a senile decrepitude by the year 1483. It owed its rehabilitation to John Standonck (c. 1450–February 5, 1504), the son of a poor cobbler of Malines.[3] As a boy Standonck studied with the Brothers of the Common Life at Gouda, matriculated at Louvain in 1469, and then went to Paris, where, by 1475, he had become regent of Montaigu. In 1490 he bought a little house in the Rue des Sept Voies (which corresponds to the present Rue Vallette) for the lodging and boarding of poor students. The numbers soon outgrew the narrow quarters, whereupon Standonck rebuilt a wing of the old College of Montaigu, on the site of the present Place du Panthéon at the intersection of the Rue Vallette. It was an ample, isolated, quasi-monastic cloister, with

[1] May 28, 1528. Enthoven, ep. 62.

[2] *Carmen de casa natalia Jesu*, first published 1496; LB. v. col. 1317; *cf.* Allen, ep. 47.

[3] On Montaigu and Standonck: Renaudet: *Préréforme*, p. 174; Godet: *La Congrégation de Montaigu*, 1912. Godet, in *Archivum Franciscanum*, ii, 1909; Imbart de la Tour: *Les Origines de la Réforme*, ii, 506, 548. Allen, i, p. 200, 166. Renaudet: "J. Standonck," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Historie du Protestantisme Français*, 1, vii (1908), 5 ff.

its own oratory, dormitories, library, refectory, and garden. The students were formed into a congregation limited in numbers to 86, of whom 72 were poor students in the arts course, 12 were theological students, and 2 were chaplains. The rule,[1] imitated from that of the Brothers of the Common Life, was strict. The fasting was perpetual, though the theologs were allowed one third of a pint of cheap wine, mixed with water, at each meal. Precautions against vermin are suggestive, especially when compared with Rabelais's satirical reference to "the short-winged hawks of Montaigu." Flogging was a frequent punishment,[2] though we never hear that Erasmus was subjected to it, as Loyola was. The Congregation existed in its constitution after February, 1495, but it did not move into its new quarters until May 17, 1496. After Erasmus had left the college, Standonck was banished from France and, on June 16, 1499, he put the institution in charge of John Major, whom Erasmus ridiculed, and of Noel Beda, whom he hated.

Standonck's reforming activities were not confined to Paris. He helped Henry of Bergen to found schools at Cambrai and at Malines, and with the assistance of Adrian of Utrecht he started a college at Louvain in the year 1500. In 1496 he was also busy with the reform of the Augustinian Canons. The General Chapter held at Windisheim under his inspiration and at the demand of the delegates from Château-Landon, appointed six monks as a committee of reform. One of these was John Mauburn, a good man with whom Erasmus was acquainted.[3]

All these connections with friends in the Netherlands made it natural that when Erasmus went to Paris he should first enter the *Domus pauperum* at Montaigu. There he had an unhappy time, and judged the methods severely. "Nowhere," he says bitterly, "do they form

[1] The written rule (Godet, p. 52) dates from January 30, 1503, but it represents the earlier customs.

[2] Henry Botteus to Erasmus, March 6, 1528, LB. App. ep. 347.

[3] Allen, ep. 52.

youths in less elegant science and in worse morals." To Standonck he allowed good intentions, but thought that his judgment was lacking. Having been reared in poverty himself, he insisted on his scholars having "so hard a bed, so sparing and cheap a diet, such heavy labor and such long vigils, that within one year many men of noble mind and bright promise either committed suicide or became blind, or mad, or leprous."[1] Indeed, the rotten eggs and the infected bedchambers soon made Erasmus ill, and he was obliged to return for a visit to the Netherlands.[2] Kindly received by the Bishop of Cambrai, he recovered his strength and then made a short stay at Steyn. Encouraged by his friends here to go back to Paris, he did so in September, 1496. That he did not again seek admission to Montaigu was partly due to his dislike of the college, partly to the bad odor in which he was probably held by the rigorists, Major and Beda. More than thirty years later, when Loyola was a pupil at Montaigu, his doubts about Erasmus's orthodoxy were confirmed by local traditions.[3]

Erasmus naturally welcomed an opportunity of leaving so disagreeable and dangerous a place and going to board with some wealthy young Englishmen he was tutoring. The atmosphere of his new lodgings was rendered lively by the encounters of the mistress and her maid. The candidate in theology did not make matters any more peaceful, but, on the contrary, advised the maid to retaliate:

"Do you fancy," said I to her, "that the issue of battles depends only on strength? . . . When she attacks you again pull off her cap" (for the little women of Paris deck themselves wonderfully with black caps), "and go for her hair." This I said in jest, supposing it had been taken in the same sense. But just before supper time, a guest who is pursuivant of Charles VIII, commonly called Gentil Garçon, ran up breathless. "Come here," cried he, "my masters, and you will see a bloody sight." We ran to the spot and found the

[1] *Colloquia*, "Ichthyophagia" (1526), LB. i, 806 f; *cf.* 632A.

[2] Allen, i, p. 50, and ep. 48.

[3] Godet, p. 99. On Major and Beda, see above. They were inmates of the college at this time, though not yet principals.

landlady and the maid rolling on the ground in so fierce a struggle that it was with difficulty we pulled them apart. . . . On one side lay the mistress's cap, on the other the girl's kerchief, the ground was covered with tufts of hair. . . . The landlady took heaven and earth to witness that she had never met a girl so small and so vicious. . . . I congratulated myself that she had no suspicions of my part in the matter.[1]

These self-congratulations may have been premature; at any rate, Erasmus was soon asked to leave, which he did with much hard feeling on all sides. The warning was not so much due to the "inept cunning" of the landlady, Antonia, as to "the perfidy of certain persons." Erasmus's letters at this time are filled with denunciation of the guardian of the two young Englishmen whom he was tutoring, a Scotchman whom he describes as "glaring from under his bushy eyebrows with his brutal eyes; his head trembling, his lips livid, his teeth discolored, his poisonous breath emerging from his foul jaws," an "assassin," and "a serpent."[2] As the denunciations are as vague as they are violent, it is difficult to get at the real cause of the quarrel. It seems, however, extremely likely that the tutor became suspicious of Erasmus's relations with one of his pupils, a certain Gray, to whom the Dutch priest was writing letters in the same loverlike tone with which he had formerly addressed his companions in the monastery.

If we ask what was actually the moral life of the student at this time, we must remember that the city was corrupt. Popular plays, written but a little later, commonly turn on the seduction of girls. In one of them the wife of a merchant goes to a brothel to get an assignation. In another comedy the love of an abbé and a married woman is given a happy ending by their mutual vows of fidelity to each other.[3] The university had a number of students given over to dissipation.

[1] Allen, ep. 55; Nichols, ep. 47. Spring, 1497.
[2] Allen, epp. 60, 61. Nichols, epp. 78, 55.
[3] *Le Théâtre Français au XVIe et au XVIIe siècle*, ed. E. Fournier. Paris, *sine anno*.

How far Erasmus yielded to the temptations of youth and boon companionship cannot certainly be told; but his worst could not have been very bad. His own testimony, that he was so moderate in food and drink that he took them like medicine and that he never served Venus, for he found no time for such things, must be given some weight.[1] It is true that rumors reached his old home that "he did nothing but feast, play the fool, and fall in love," and that he was at considerable pains to contradict them.[2] On the other hand, Robert Gaguin, a man of sobriety and parts, praised him for being "religious no less in life and in speech than in dress."[3] He frequently alludes to love-making in his *Colloquies* and elsewhere; but whether any of his anecdotes are based on personal experience it is difficult to say. On the face of it the most compromising would be the dialogue between a youth and a harlot, in which Sophronius converts Lucretia to a better life. But this dialogue, realistic as it is, is the best proof of how difficult it is to disentangle personal reminiscences from dramatic situations, for in all probability Erasmus borrowed the plot from the tenth-century nun, Hroswitha, whose dramas were popular in his day.[4] More damaging is the remark in one of the *Colloquies* that the best way to learn French at Paris is from the little women of the place.[5]

During his years at Paris Erasmus was the bosom friend of a brilliant but notoriously immoral Italian humanist, Faustus Andrelinus, "whose lectures," as

[1] To J. Gaver, March 1, 1524, LB. ep. 671.

[2] Allen, ep. 83; Nichols, ep. 81. Paris, December 14, 1498. If this epistle could be dated one year later—and the date is uncertain—one might suspect Standonck of having been the talebearer, for it was exactly at this time that he returned to Cambrai. Godet, 30.

[3] R. Gaguin, *Epistolæ et Orationes*, ed. Thuasne, 1903 f, i, p. 25 f.

[4] *Hrotswithae Gandeshemensis comoedias sex*, ed. J. Bendixen, 1862, p. 93, No. 5. "Paphnutius." Paphnutius the hermit visits Thais the courtesan as a lover and converts her. On contemporary familiarity with Hroswitha, Dürer's picture reproduced in *Klassiker der Kunst*, p. 190. The dialogue, LB. i, 718.

[5] LB. i, 634 f.

the Dutchman says, "on all parts of the poets, even on the *Priapeia*, were in a manner, to say nothing worse, truly Faustine."[1] With him Erasmus exchanged gay notes during a lecture,[2] and letters on the kisses he had given and received.[3] He even got his friend to write a testimonial[4] to his character to send home. Andrelinus, indeed, cared for nothing but the classics. Since 1489 he had taught at Paris, and his lectures, rather witty than learned, had attracted large crowds. He was accustomed to attack theologians very bitterly.[5]

Other associates of Erasmus were more respectable. To one of the leading scholars of the day, Robert Gaguin, he had a letter of introduction which he presented soon after his arrival.[6] Gaguin, though he considered Erasmus too much of a toady, was so pleased with his learning, his style, his morals and piety, that he asked him almost at once to write an Introduction to his *History of France*. Disregarding his new friend's strictures on his parasitic manners the young man discharged the obligation with gusto, heaping both the author of the book and his nation with fulsome praise.[7] Gaguin, Faustus, and Erasmus soon became fast friends. The French historian has left an epigram, hitherto unpublished, testifying his high regard for the other two.[8] It was written on the occasion of a dinner at Gaguin's apartments, and may be rendered as follows:

> Welcome, O Faustus, bard loved by Apollo;
> Welcome no less, Erasmus, who dost follow
> As Faustus' comrade. Not with flowing cup
> I greet you; meagerly must poets sup.

[1] Allen, ep. 1111.
[2] Allen, epp. 96–100; Nichols, epp. 88–92.
[3] Allen, ep. 103; Nichols, ep. 98.
[4] Allen, ep. 84; Nichols, ep. 79.
[5] Erasmus to Vives, 1519. Allen, ep. 1104. On Faustus, see his *Eclogues*, ed. by W. P. Mustard, 1918.
[6] Allen, epp. 43–44.
[7] Allen, ep. 46, October 7, 1495.
[8] British Museum MS. Egerton 1651, fol. 5. For text see Appendix III.

Though Gaguin thinks you worthy better meat
And even of banquets such as high gods eat,
You see no feast here, but a friend's true heart,
And home of friendly fortune. Small the part
Of furniture and dress to you I offer,
But all my heart and soul instead I proffer.

But neither theology nor pleasure was Erasmus's deepest interest at Paris. As previously, his study and his delight was the literature of ancient Rome. He also began to learn Greek, but did not like his teacher and did not advance far.[1] Besides reading, he wrote a good deal and even published a little. One of the first things he had printed was a collection of *Odes* by his friend, William Hermann of Gouda, which he sent to his patron, the Bishop of Cambrai, in January, 1497, with the following note:[2]

I am giving you the gift of another, having been able to print nothing myself on account of my occupation with theological studies, for I follow the advice of Jerome to learn before I teach. But you may shortly expect some fruit from my studies.

While at Paris Erasmus apparently received some financial help from the Bishop of Cambrai,[3] but was forced to eke out his substance by taking pupils. Among them were some young men of high rank—a son of James III of Scotland who became Archbishop of St. Andrews in 1497, and William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, later tutor of Henry VIII. Throughout his life Mountjoy was one of the humanist's best patrons. Erasmus's first extant letter to him begins: "Hail, truly named, 'mon joie.'"[4] Erasmus had no modesty about proclaiming his own merits as a teacher. When one of his pupils requested his assistance in the composition of a Latin letter to his brother, the humanist, as he acknowledges, wrote about himself in these terms:[5]

[1] Allen, i, p. 7.
[2] Allen, ep. 51.
[3] So, at least, Mr. Allen conjectures, ep. 48.
[4] Allen, ep. 79.
[5] Allen, ep. 61; partly translated by Nichols, ep. 55.

After dinner Erasmus, Augustine, and myself took a stroll in the very place among the vineyards where, as Erasmus told us, he had more than once sauntered with you, drunk with sweet words, while he recalled you by his eloquent exhortations from sordid cares and ravished your whole soul with love of letters. Do you recognize the spot? There Erasmus fed us with lettered speech, more delicate fare than the supper we had eaten. . . . It seems to me that now by the blessing of the saints, the supreme good has fallen to me, for what could I pray for more than a learned and friendly teacher, and now I have the most learned and kindest of all; I mean Erasmus whom I so long sought in vain. Now I have him and possess him all to myself and delight in him day and night. What do you say? I hold Helicon itself within my chamber walls. What is it to live among the choir of Muses if this is not to do so?

When writers, scholars, and artists were dependent on a patron for their living, there was danger that they would be tempted to flatter this individual; just as, now that they are dependent on the reading public, it is probable that they are induced to flatter the prejudices of that patron. Neither form of writing for a living is more objectionable than the other; if flattery is used it is disgraceful not from the object on which it is spent, but from the prostitution that it implies of noble talents to a base end. As it was the general custom four hundred years ago for literary men to receive pensions from the great, the fact that Erasmus received, and even solicited, such favors, calls for no apology. It must be confessed, however, that he occasionally, though rarely, carried his importunity beyond the bounds of decency.

This is most notable in his relations with Anne of Veere, a daughter of one of the greatest nobles in Holland and widow of Philip the Bastard of Burgundy.[1] She had engaged one of Erasmus's friends to tutor her son Adolph and, doubtless at his invitation, Erasmus visited her at her castle of Tournehem, between Calais and St. Omer. Here he got to know Adolph, and probably

[1] On Anne of Veere, see M. P. Roosenboom: *The Scottish Staple in the Netherlands*, 1910, pp. 32 and xliii.

put in his *Colloquy*, "The Shipwreck,"[1] a record of some personal experience of the young man. The kindness and courtesy of the great lady aroused hopes of securing from her money for a projected journey to Italy. For the next few years the young Dutchman addressed to her and to his friend Batt, the tutor of her son, appeals of the most pressing nature. For example, December 12, 1500, he wrote to the latter:[2]

> Point out to my lady how much more credit I shall do her by my learning than the other divines whom she maintains. They preach ordinary sermons; I write what will live forever; they, with their silly rubbish, are heard in one or two churches; my books will be read by all who know Latin and Greek in every country in the world; such unlearned divines abound everywhere, men like me are scarcely found in many centuries. Repeat all this to her unless you are too superstitious to tell a few fibs for a friend.

Undiscouraged by the cool reception of this promise of immortality, Erasmus wrote and dedicated to the young Prince Adolph an *Exhortation to Embrace Virtue*, where, under the pretext of placing before his eyes images of perfection, the author heaped upon the little lord, upon his mother, and upon his tutor, the most fulsome flattery. Failing to realize from this also, in proportion to his hopes, the irrepressible suitor made a supreme effort and addressed his hoped-for patroness directly in an epistle comparing her with two other Annas, the mother of Samuel and the sister of Dido, and predicting for her also a like eternity of glory. He capped the climax of this ungracious proceeding by writing at the same time to Batt that he had never penned anything with so much repugnance as this parasitic flattery, and by heartily abusing Anne of Veere behind her back.[3]

[1] LB. i, 712.
[2] Allen, ep. 139; Nichols, ep. 139.
[3] Allen, ep. 146; Nichols, ep. 140.

CHAPTER II

THE REVIVAL OF ANTIQUITY: THE CLASSICS AND THE GOSPEL

THERE was nothing precocious about the genius of Erasmus. When he was thirty he had produced hardly anything. Had he died at the age of forty he would scarce be remembered now. The prodigious success of his *Folly*, of his New Testament, of his *Paraphrases*, of his *Colloquies*, of his *Epistles*, not only raised his fame among his contemporaries and posterity, but cast a reflex luster on his earlier works. In these, however, his deepest interest, the restoration of antiquity both classic and Christian, had already found expression. And even these early works met with a hearty reception from contemporaries to whom these interests were vital.

For it was just because Erasmus so perfectly expressed the spirit of his time that he gradually won the international reputation that all but made him arbiter of the great questions which arose with the Reformation and cried for authoritative judgment. Erasmus came at the acme of the Renaissance, when humanism had gathered its full force and reached its maturity, but before it had begun to wither in the fierce heats of confessional controversy and the drought of too academic, too remote, too fastidiously exclusive an interest. In his last years he was to see and to attack the absurdities of a classicism become a mania, an obsession for the antique, a haughty assertion of superiority to the rest of the world. But in his prime he saw and shared the glow of enthusiasm for the full revival of Greek and Latin letters. He also had the

genius to combine into one stream the two contending currents of pagan and of Christian antiquity. For him the Gospel was the "philosophy of Christ," and the philosophy of the Greeks a natural gospel. When he read Cicero he reflected: "A heathen wrote this to heathen, and yet his moral principles have justice, sanctity, sincerity, truth, fidelity to nature; nothing false or careless is in them."[1] "When I read certain passages of these great men," he confessed again, "I can hardly refrain from saying, 'St. Socrates, pray for me.'"[2]

Erasmus's great success in Christianizing the Renaissance was due partly to the narrowness of his interests. There were sides of life cultivated by his generation with enthusiasm and consummate ability, which hardly came into his purview at all. The most glorious artists of the whole world—Leonardo and Titian, Michelangelo and Raphael, San Gallo and Bramante—were his contemporaries, and he had opportunity to see their works, but not once, I believe, does he mention any of them in his pages. With Matsys, Dürer, and Holbein he came into personal contact, but hardly noticed their art. Again, a new world was discovered during his lifetime. In his youth Columbus found America and Vasco da Gama broke the path around the Cape of Good Hope to India; in his manhood Cortez and Pizarro and Balboa and De Soto enacted romances of discovery and conquest that would be thought too wonderful for fiction, and Magellan put a girdle around the earth. These triumphs fired the imagination of contemporaries, of More and Camoens, of Ariosto and Rabelais; the tales of Amerigo Vespucci were sought and eagerly read by Beatus Rhenanus[3] and Eck[4] and Vadian; but Erasmus, though he met

[1] Preface to Cicero's *De Officiis*, September 10, 1519. Allen, ep. 1013.

[2] *Convivium religiosum*, LB. i, 683.

[3] There is extant a copy of Waldseemüller's *Cosmography* with the name of Beatus Rhenanus written in. See the facsimile by Wieser, 1907.

[4] Allen: *Age of Erasmus*, p. 92. And see Eck's edition of Aristotle in the Cornell library.

the son of Columbus in 1520, hardly let an allusion to the New World pass his pen.

Then, again, he had no interest in science. While Leonardo was experimenting in anatomy and physics and accumulating facts about geology and astronomy, while Copernicus[1] was working out the most momentous discovery that has ever dawned upon the human mind, while Vives,[2] who was well known to Erasmus, was stating that men should no longer rely on authority but should look at nature for themselves, the attitude of Erasmus was intensely conservative. Like Socrates, he not only did not care for natural science, he actively disliked it as leading men's thoughts away from the more important problems of moral philosophy.[3]

Nor did he have attention to spare for beautiful scenery, nor for the common life of men as seen in their cities and country homes. He visited many parts of England, of France, of Italy, of Germany, of Switzerland, and of the Netherlands, but in all his works there are but one or two notable descriptions of town or country. How much he might have told us of Paris and London, of Venice and Rome and Naples, of the Swiss passes, and of the Rhine!

But, after all, to point out these limitations is only to say that Erasmus was Erasmus and not somebody else. The very concentration of his mental life was doubtless one cause of the consummate mastery he displayed in his chosen field. As a scholar, as a stylist, as a thoughtful and popular writer on religion and education, he has had few equals. His work centers around a few ideas, the principal ones expressed in phrases that recur over and over again in all his writings,

[1] Copernicus was in Italy just before Erasmus was there, and he knew one of Erasmus's friends, Celio Calcagnini, who, under his influence, wrote, about 1520, a treatise *Quod cælum stet, terra moveatur*. Copernicus did not publish his own great work until 1543, but he had arrived at his conclusions long before, and they were talked of in the learned world. On Calcagnini, Allen, iii, p. 26.

[2] A. Bonilla y San Martin: *Luis Vives y la filosofía del renacimiento*, 1903.

[3] Erasmus to Carondilet, January 5, 1522, LB. ep. 613.

like the *leitmotifs* of a symphony, "good literature," "the philosophy of Christ," "peace."

His first ideal was that of culture founded on a thorough knowledge of the classics. His mastery of Latin literature was imperial. Doubtless he heard, as a boy and a young man, of the first publication of many Latin authors, and the zest of new discovery was added to the imperishable charm of the poets and orators. Before Erasmus went to school at Deventer there had already been printed much of Cicero, Lactantius, Apuleius, Aulus Gellius, Cæsar, Lucan, Pliny, Vergil, Livy, Sallust, Juvenal, Persius, Quintilian, Suetonius, Terence, Tacitus, Ovid, Horace, Martial, Plautus, Tibullus, Catullus, Propertius, Statius, Lucretius, and Seneca.[1] But few of these were complete; fresh portions of their works kept coming out later, as did Tacitus's *Annals 1–5*.[2] New minor authors appeared from time to time. Erasmus was therefore able to command the bulk of Latin literature in printed form. He shared his contemporaries' enthusiasm for manuscripts and eagerly sought new ones himself. Thus he wrote to the College of Canons at Metz, asking for a catalogue of their noble collection.[3] In later life he edited a number of Latin and Greek classics.

In the latter half of 1499 Erasmus made a visit to England. On his return to Paris his first enterprise was the compilation of a work which was to prove one of his greatest immediate successes, his book of *Adages* or *Familiar Quotations from the Classics*. Soon after his arrival he was laid up for a time with an attack of fever for which he blamed his new lodgings. He called in the services of a friend and "devotee of the Muses," one William Cop, a native of Basle, then physician to the German nation in the University of Paris. The skill of Cop and the power of St. Génévière had cured

[1] Sir J. Edwin Sandys: *History of Classical Scholarship*, ii, 1908, p. 103.
[2] Which appeared in 1515.
[3] Louvain, July 14, 1519; Allen, ep. 997.

him of a similar attack three years earlier and again their combined ministrations slowly restored him to health.[1] However, Cop forbade serious writing or study during his convalescence, and in search for an occupation Erasmus took to browsing around among his favorite authors with all the more zest, perhaps, that he had had less time than usual for reading in England. There was no large library within reach, he was still unable to make much headway with Greek,[2] but he had with him the familiar Latins. His friend Gaguin lent him Quintilian, Macrobius, and the Rhetoric of George of Trebizond, which he wished to see.[3] In March he writes that he is deep in his books, quite happy, evidently, except for the annoying scarcity of money:

> Do you want to know what I am doing? I devote myself to my friends, with whom I enjoy the most delightful intercourse. . . . With them I shut myself in a corner, where I escape the windy crowd and either speak to them in sweet whispers or listen to their gentle voices, conversing with them as with myself. Can anything be more comfortable than this? They never hide their own secrets, yet they keep sacred whatever is intrusted to them. They never divulge abroad what we confide freely to their intimacy. When summoned they are at your side; when not summoned they do not intrude. When bidden they speak; when not bidden they are silent. They talk of what you wish, as much as you wish, as long as you wish. They utter no flattery, feign nothing, keep back nothing. They frankly show you your faults, but slander no one. All that they say is either cheering or salutary. In prosperity they keep you modest, in affliction they console, they never change with fortune.

[1] Allen, ep. 124; I, p. 286. Cop studied Greek at Paris under Lascaris, Erasmus, and Aleander, and later published translations from Hippocrates and Galen. He was also a physician of great repute. LeFèvre d'Étaples says that he cured him of sleeplessness. Erasmus, however, speaks not altogether lightly of the part played by Ste. Généviève in his recovery. "If I should have a second attack of this fever, it would be all up with your Erasmus, my Batt. Nevertheless we keep up hope, relying on Ste. Généviève, whose ready aid has delivered us now the second time." Allen, *ibid.*, and ep. 50; I, pp. 164–165.

[2] In September, 1500, he writes that he cannot read a copy of Homer, temporarily in his possession, but that he finds comfort in the mere look of it. Allen, ep. 131; I, p. 305.

[3] Allen, epp. 121, 122; I, pp. 283, 284; Nichols, epp. 114, 115.

They follow in all dangers, abiding with you even to the grave. . . . With these sweet friends I am buried in seclusion. What wealth or what scepters would I barter for this tranquillity? Now, that you may not miss the meaning of my metaphor, pray understand all that I have said about these friends to be meant of books, companionship with which has made of me a truly happy man.[1]

In this situation the idea occurred to Erasmus of culling from the pages of these authors a selection of brief sayings or epigrams, useful for quotation. The task seemed to him a light and agreeable one, not the tax upon his strength that one of his more ambitious projects would have been. The book, when completed, would be an attractive gift to dedicate to one of the wealthy patrons whose interest in him it was just now so important to keep warm. He hesitated a little between young Adolph of Veere and Lord Mountjoy, deciding finally in favor of the latter.[2] The fashion of quoting from the Greek and Latin classics has disappeared in our day, whether the disappearance be due to an improvement in literary taste or to a decline of polite learning. We rarely see any longer the old-fashioned English gentleman who used to cap his remarks with a line from Vergil or Horace. We can, therefore, hardly realize how excessively in Erasmus's time a knack at quoting was admired nor what elegance and weight were added to any composition by the use of examples and citations from ancient literature. *The Prince* of Machiavelli, the *Essays* of Montaigne, both written during this period, are famous illustrations of the practice. Their continual references to the classics serve for us merely to invest with a quaint and pedantic

[1] Allen, ep. 125; I, pp. 288–289; Nichols, ep. 119. A distinguished contemporary of Erasmus had a similar feeling for his books. See Machiavelli, *Opere*, ep. 26; English translation in Villari, *Life and Times of Machiavelli*, p. 159. Erasmus may have been recalling the celebrated passage in Cicero's *Pro Archia*.

[2] Erasmus composed a tentative draft of a dedication which he did not use. He omitted all names, but internal evidence seems to indicate that it was meant for Adolph of Veere. At the last moment he wrote his dedication to Mountjoy. Allen, epp. 125, 126, 211; pp. 288, 289, 443.

atmosphere the authors' keen and radical philosophies of life. We tolerate the references for the sake of the rest. But to the writers themselves their literary authorities were a serious matter, as essential parts of their arguments as their own shrewd observations upon mankind. Men of less genius than Machiavelli or Montaigne or Erasmus depended largely upon a choice array of classical allusions to obtain for themselves any sort of hearing. For them, for the whole world of scholars and cultivated gentlemen, a convenient manual of effective quotations would be a labor-saving device of priceless value. An Italian, Polydore Vergil of Urbino, had published a book of Proverbs at Venice in 1498, but it was a comparatively small and simple affair, not yet in wide circulation. Erasmus seems not to have known of its existence at this time. Later, Vergil and his friends accused the Dutchman of plagiarizing, and he was obliged to defend himself. His relations with the historian were temporarily ruffled, though they finally became friendly again and Erasmus assisted in the publication of Vergil's lesser works.[1]

In the preface to the first edition of his *Adagia*, nevertheless, Erasmus felt called upon to justify his undertaking. The book soon needed no defense for its appearance and no explanation of its utility, but in the beginning he was anxious to prove its worth.

> What is such an aid either in gracing a speech with a delicate air of festivity or in enlivening it with learned jests or in seasoning it with the salt of urbanity or in adorning it with gems of translation or in illuminating it with the brilliancy of epigrams or in diversifying it with the flowers of allegory and allusion or in investing it with the charm of antiquity as a rich and full supply of these adages, like a storeroom built at home and well supplied? For everyone knows that the chief wealth and refinements of speech consist of epigrams, metaphors, parables, examples, illustrations, similes, images, and figures of this sort. . . . Everyone also enjoys hearing

[1] Nichols, I, p. 242. Also Erasmus to Vergil, Louvain, December 23, 1520, Allen, ep. 1175. Vergil to Erasmus, June 3, 1523, in S. A. Gabbema; *Illustrium et Clarorum Virorum Epistolæ*, No. 3; Erasmus to Pace, June 11, 1521, Allen, ep. 1210.

what he recognizes, especially if it has the sanction of antiquity; so adages, like wine, increase in value with age. . . .

You might think that I was saying all this from love of my own work were not the truth conspicuous in every class of author, that whoever has especially excelled his fellows has especially delighted in these adages. In the first place, what has the world richer than the language of Plato or more heavenly than his philosophy? But in his dialogues on every subject, good Lord! the proverbs are scattered thick as little stars, so that no comedy gives me such pleasure as the dialectic of this philosopher. Then Plautus, the peculiar darling of the theater, bubbles over with proverbs and says hardly anything that he did not take from the mouths of the common people or that did not pass at once from the stage into their common talk, so that for this talent above all he deserves to be ranked in eloquence with the Muses. Terence has more art than Plautus and therefore uses proverbs less frequently but more fastidiously. Did not Varro, the greatest of scholars, find such satisfaction in proverbs that he sought no other arguments or headings for his satires? From his work the following are still quoted: The ass at the lyre; Know thyself; Old men are in their second childhood. . . .

But if, as Christians, we prefer Christian examples, I can easily adduce Jerome as one of many. . . . His books contain more proverbs than even the comedies of Menander, and clever ones, such as: He leads the bull to the combat; The camel danced; Blunt wedges rive hard knots; Diamond cuts diamond; The tired ox plants his feet more firmly; The lid is worthy of the dish. . . . There are adages even in the writings of the apostles. (You are not, I suppose, so engrossed with Scotus as never to glance at them.) Adages occur often even in the Gospels, namely, these: The dog returned to his vomit; The sow wallowing in her mire; Beating the air: Tinkling cymbal; We have piped unto you and ye have not danced; The mote and the beam; A stone for bread. . . . Wherefore for many reasons we have thought it no futile or sterile task to instruct studious youth to the best of our ability in this mode of speech or at least to instigate them to it, seeing that it has been adopted with good cause by so many learned and divine writers.[1]

The kernel of Erasmus's book was a compilation of pithy sayings culled from the ancients. With these he incorporated a certain number of more recent proverbial phrases, including about a hundred of German origin,[2]

[1] Dedicatory epistle to first edition. Allen, ep. 126; pp. 291–295.

[2] *Adagiorum Collectanea;* on this see *Bibliotheca Erasmiana, s. v.* and J. Eiselein: *Die Sprichwörter und Sinnreden des deutschen Volkes in alter und neuer Zeit,* 1860, p. xxviii, note.

though all, of course, were given only in the Latin form. The first edition, published by John Philip of Kreuznach, at Paris, in June, 1500, contained 818 adages, each with a commentary, usually very short. The first two proverbs are on friendship, "Friends have all things in common," and "A friend is another self,"[1] the notes giving illustrative material from Terence, Menander, Cicero, Aulus Gellius, Plato, Socrates, and Plutarch. Marvelous specimens of erudition they were in that age before dictionaries and concordances had made reference easy. Richard Burton could hardly display more learning over a trifle in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* than did Erasmus in his *Adages*. And yet Gaguin seems to have criticized the notes as too formal and lifeless.[2] Erasmus, therefore, set about collecting material for a new edition. He doubtless followed the practice himself, which he recommended to a friend, of keeping a commonplace book for the notation of striking sayings met with in the course of reading.

Various editions, slightly enlarged, were published during the next few years, but a completely new form was given to the book by the immense increase in size of the edition published by Aldo at Venice in September, 1508, with the changed title, *Adagiorum Chiliades*.[3] It contained in all 3,260 adages, and the treatment of those taken over from the first edition was so altered as to make the Venetian work almost altogether new. Some old proverbs were suppressed, the order of others changed, and the commentary greatly expanded. Erasmus had sought Italy largely with a view to doing this work, and he was enabled to accomplish it because he was now more fluent in Greek and more forward to speak his mind, and because of the exceptional facilities he found at Venice in the way of access to books. Of all this he has left an account in his commentary on the adage "*Festina lente*,"[4] which

[1] LB. i, cols. 13 ff.
[2] LB. x, p. 200.
[3] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana.*
[4] LB. ii, 403 ff; Chil. ii, centuria i, prov. 1.

first appeared in the edition published by Froben in 1526. He says:

Aldo was then making a library whose only limits should be those of the world. . . . Venice, famous on many accounts, is most famous because of the Aldine press, so that whatever book is printed there can easily be sold, whatever its origin. While I, a Dutchman, was editing my *Adages* in Italy, many learned men there of their own accord offered me authors not yet published, which they thought would be of use to me. Aldo had nothing in his treasury which he did not let me see. John Lascaris, Baptista Egnatius, Marcus Musurus, Brother Urban, all did the same. Even men I did not know personally helped me. . . . The whole business was finished in about nine months, though meanwhile I was suffering seriously from the stone, my first experience of it. See now how much the book would have lost if those learned gentlemen had not lent me their manuscripts! Among them were the works of Plato in Greek, Plutarch's *Lives* and *Moralia*, of which the printing was begun just as I finished my enterprise, the *Dipnosophistæ* of Athenæus, Aphthonius, Hermogenes with a commentary, the whole of Aristides with scholia, brief commentaries on Hesiod and Theocritus, Eustathius on the whole of Homer, Pausanias, Pindar with a set of careful notes, a collection of proverbs ascribed to Plutarch, another ascribed to Apostolius. Jerome Aleander supplied me with the last-named volume. There were other smaller books which I either do not remember or do not consider important to mention here. No one of them at all had at that time been printed.

As a specimen of the *Adages* in its new form let us take the following:

EVIL COMMUNICATIONS CORRUPT GOOD MANNERS

This is the meaning of that verse of Menander which the apostle St. Paul did not disdain to quote in his first letter to the Corinthians, —*Φθείρουσιν ἤθη χρῆσθ' ὁμιλίαι κακαί*—that is, Wicked companionship mars good manners. Tertullian translated the Greek line for his wife, but freely, after the manner of Latin comedy. "Choose," he says, "associations and relationships worthy of God, remembering the verse sanctified by the apostle, Wrong companions corrupt good manners." Aristotle has a sentiment like this in the ninth book of the *Ethics*, and his line is famous among the Greeks,—*Κακοῖς ὁμιλῶν καὐτὸς ἐκβήσῃ κακός*—that is, If you live with evil-doers you will yourself become evil. Although it may appear foreign to my undertaking to include so much, I still cannot refrain from adding the following passage from Seneca, *On Anger*, book 3. If it does not assist much in the explanation of the proverb, it

is certainly pertinent to the ordering of life. "Manners," he says, "are derived from one's associates. And just as infections pass by bodily contact from one person to another, so one heart transmits its evil to its neighbors. A drunkard inspires his comrades with a craving for wine. The companionship of sensualists weakens a man even if he be strong. Avarice spreads contagion among those who see it. The same rule, on the other hand, is true of the virtues, for they brighten everything about them. Nor do a healthful land and a salubrious climate profit the sick more than association with the upright the feeble of soul. This truth you will appreciate, as far as that is possible, if you observe how wild animals grow tame by living with us and how every fierce beast loses its violence by long dwelling in the habitation of men." Thus far I have repeated the words of Seneca. Moreover, while every form of contact and intercourse has a great effect in reforming or depraving the disposition of mortals, speech is the most influential of all, for it rises from the secret recesses of the soul and carries with it a twofold and mysterious force or (to express it better in Greek) *ἐνέργειαν*, which it discharges within the mind of the hearer into which it penetrates, an instantaneous poison if it be baneful, an efficacious remedy if it be wholesome. Indeed, I do not remember reading as yet any other dictum of the philosophers which seems to me comparable with the favorite saying of my John Colet, a man both learned and incorruptible. "Our character is that of our daily conversation; we grow like what we are accustomed to hear." Now the same that is said of conversation is true also of studies. They who spend all their lives on pagan literature become themselves irreligious. They who read nothing but unclean authors must themselves in their own habits become unclean. For reading is a kind of conversation.[1]

A further edition, once more remodeled and augmented, was published by Froben in 1515.[2] Of it Erasmus says:

For this redaction I had more leisure and a more considerable library, thanks to the amazing kindness of Archbishop Warham. I was able to review my work from beginning to end, to correct numerous misprints, to complete the translation of Greek terms, to add a more copious commentary, and to supply the name of the author where it had been omitted.

This edition contained 3,411 adages; among the 151 new were three which became famous, and which were often reprinted separately, as they were little short of essays in

[1] *Adagia;* Chil. I, cent. x, 74; LB. i, col. 388.
[2] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana.*

length and form. The first of these was the *Dulce Bellum Inexpertis*, with its commentary[1] (which had, indeed, appeared in embryonic form earlier), a tract on the evils of war. The second was the *Scarabæus quærit aquilam*,[2] or "The beetle seeks the eagle." Beginning as a treatise on impotent envy, it contained a good deal of political and antimonarchical doctrine. The third, the *Sileni Alcibiadis*,[3] discoursed on the deceptiveness of appearances.

Later editions kept appearing at frequent intervals, each one a little augmented. Among the notable additions made to the redaction of 1526 was the proverb, "Make haste slowly," with a commentary of four folio pages of reminiscent discourse, from which we have already quoted, much of it curious and interesting reading enough, though wandering far from the text. This maxim, Erasmus begins by saying, had a peculiar value for princes, having been quoted by Achilles, Sardanapalus, Fabius Maximus, and Augustus:

> And that it appealed also to Titus Vespasian may easily be deduced from the antique coins struck by him. Aldo Manuzio showed me a silver coin clearly of ancient Roman workmanship, which he said had been sent him as a gift by Peter Bembo, the patrician of Venice, a young man, but one of our foremost scholars and an eager student of all ancient literature. On one side of the coin was stamped the head of Titus Vespasian with the inscription, on the other side an anchor with a dolphin wound about the shaft.

After a considerable digression on the nature and history of literary symbols and hieroglyphics Erasmus

[1] LB. i, 951 ff.

[2] LB. i, 869 ff.

[3] LB. i, 770 ff. There is at Cornell University an old English translation of this not known to the editors of the *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*. The title reads, "Here folowith a scorneful Image or monstrous shape of a maruelous strange fygure called Sileni alcibiadis. . . Imprinted at London by me John Gough." No date is given, but the tract is bound with another, evidently from the same press, a translation of Luther's "Worke made agaynst the false canonisacyon of Benno the bysshoppe. Translated and prynted in Englyssche in the year MCCCCCxxxiiii." Neither Luther's name nor that of the translator is mentioned. Other instances are known in which Luther's opinions were introduced thus anonymously into England.

remarks that Suidas reproduces the same device, and explains it by saying that the anchor, since it holds the ship, means delay, whereas the dolphin signifies speed; therefore the combination of the two expresses the meaning of the proverb, "Make haste slowly."

The mention of Aldo, and of the symbol which he had made his trade-mark, leads the author to add a few words of appreciation of the great publisher:

> If some divinity who is a friend to good letters regards favorably the noble and almost kingly vows of our Aldo, and if the fates are propitious, I promise scholars that within a few years they shall have every good author in the four languages, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Chaldee, in every branch of learning, in full and emended editions, through the efforts of this one man, and that no one shall lack any part of his literary inheritance.

Even after 1526 Erasmus kept making additions to his work, the last in the year of his death. One reason for these continual alterations was doubtless that they gave each new edition a value slightly greater than the last, and this, in the days before copyright, helped to keep control of the profits in the hands of the chosen printer, usually Froben. The book in its final form contained 4,151 proverbs. It had an enormous success, no less than sixty editions being called for during the author's lifetime and at least seventy-five more during the seventeenth century.[1] Enthusiastic commentators did not hesitate to ascribe the progress of learning and the reform of university curricula in the sixteenth century to the influence of the *Adagia*. But its popularity was not all due to its convenience as a storehouse of ornament for the aspiring Latinist.[2] There was an English translation by Richard

[1] On the *Adagia* see *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, Van der Haeghen, Van den Berghe and Arnold; vol. i, *Adagia*, Ghent, 1897. In the seventeenth century critics had begun to say that Erasmus's Latin style was not Ciceronian and his translations from the Greek were awkward. Nevertheless, twenty-four more editions of the *Adagia* were called for before the year 1700. Since then it has not been printed in its original form except in the edition of the *Opera* of 1703.

[2] Anonymous preface to edition of 1612.

Taverner in 1539, an Italian version in 1550, one in German in 1556, and one in Dutch in 1561.

In fact, the *Adages* soon became a standard work used and quoted by everyone with any pretensions to scholarship. Luther,[1] quoted it thirteen times within a single year in his correspondence, and from this compilation derived some of his political axioms. The style and thought of Montaigne[2] and of La Boétie were nourished on it. Conrad Gesner[3] richly decked his *Natural History of Animals* with proverbs about brute nature culled from the humanist. The great Elizabethans, Bacon[4] and Shakespeare,[5] knew it and used it.

To take up again the thread of Erasmus's life at the point where he published the first edition of the *Adages*, he continued to reside at Paris until September of the same year (1500), and then went to Orléans for three months. It was about this time that he seriously began the study of Greek, for reasons explained to one of his patrons, Antony of Bergen, Abbot of St. Bertin:[6]

> By lucky chance I got some Greek works, which I am stealthily transcribing night and day. It may be asked why I am so pleased with the example of Cato the Censor as to be learning Greek at my age. . . . I am determined that it is better to learn late than to be without knowledge which it is of the utmost importance to possess. I had a taste of this learning a long time ago, but it was only with the tip of the tongue, as they say; and having lately dipped deeper into it, we see, what we have often read in the most weighty authors, that Latin erudition, however ample, is crippled and imperfect without Greek. We have in Latin at best some small brooks and turbid pools, while the Greeks have the purest fountains and

[1] On Luther, *infra*, p. 213.

[2] Montaigne: *Essais*, ii, 5; iii, 5, 6, 8, etc. On La Boétie my *Age of the Reformation*, 599.

[3] H. Morley: "Conrad Gesner," in *Clement Marot and other Studies*, 1871, ii, 120.

[4] Francis Bacon: *Works*, ii, 1861, pp. 126 ff, several quotations from the *Adages* and *Ciceronianus* in the *De Augmentis*, 1623.

[5] Shakespeare: *Troilus and Cressida*, "Blunt wedges rive hard knots"; *Hamlet*, II, ii, 416: "An old man is twice a child."

[6] Allen, ep. 149; Nichols, ep. 143; *cf.* similar expressions in Allen, epp. 129, 138.

rivers flowing with gold. I see that it is mere madness to touch with a finger that principal part of theology, which treats of divine mysteries, without being furnished with the apparatus of Greek, when those who translated the sacred books have, with all their scrupulosity, so rendered the Greek figures of speech that not even the primary sense, which our theologians call "the literal," can be perceived by those who do not know Greek.

Erasmus then gives an example of the sort of misunderstanding he means, arising from a verse in a Psalm, which in Greek reads: Καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία μου ἐνώπιόν μου ἐστὶ διαπαντός but in the Latin vulgate[1] *peccatum meum contra me est semper*. A certain theologian, he says, had once given a long disquisition on this text, pointing out how the spirit was ever fighting with the flesh, whereas, he missed the whole meaning of the words, which is not "my sin is ever against me," but "my sin is ever before me."

While on a visit to the Netherlands the next summer Erasmus spent much time on Greek studies. By this time he had become so enraptured that he would rather pawn his coat than fail to get any new publications in that language, especially if it were something Christian, like the Psalms or the gospels.[2] He speaks of reading Euripides and Isocrates; and he ordered Greek books from Paris.[3]

The publication of Greek authors was much less advanced than that of Latin. Almost all the *editiones principes* were brought out in Italy, and many were doubtless hard to get north of the Alps. By the year 1500 there had been printed, in this order: Æsop, Homer, Isocrates, Theocritus, Hesiod, the *Anthologia Græca*, the *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Alcestis* and *Andromache* of Euripides, Aristotle, Bion, Moschus, Theognis, Apollonius Rhodius, Lucian, nine plays of Aristophanes, "Phalaris," the *Astronomici veteres*, and a few grammatical writings and minor authors. The year 1502 saw

[1] Vulgate, Psalm l:5; in English Psalm li:3.
[2] Allen, ep. 160; Nichols, ep. 156.
[3] Allen, ep. 158; Nichols, ep. 154.

the publication of Thucydides, of Sophocles, and of Herodotus. All eighteen plays of Euripides and Xenophon's *Hellenica* were printed first in 1503; and Demosthenes in the year following. Plutarch's *Moralia* came out in 1509; Pindar and Plato in 1513; more of Aristophanes and Xenophon and the whole of Pausanias and Strabo in 1516; Plutarch's *Lives* in 1517; six plays of Æschylus in 1518; Galen in 1525; Epictetus in 1528; Polybius in 1530; eleven plays of Aristophanes in 1532; Ptolemy in 1533.[1]

While prosecuting his Greek studies with diligence and success Erasmus began Hebrew but, as he expresses it, "frightened by the strangeness of the idiom, and considering the insufficiency of the human mind to master many subjects,"[2] he soon gave it up. Moreover, the Hebrew Scriptures did not attract him as did the New Testament, and he was actively repelled by the other Jewish writers. So he wrote to a Hebrew scholar, somewhat later:[3]

> I could wish you were more given to Greek than to Hebrew studies, although I do not condemn the latter. I see the Jewish race is fed full of lifeless tales and produces nothing but a little vapor, to wit the Cabbala, the Talmud, the Tetragrammaton, the Gates of Light, and such vain titles. Italy has many Jews; Spain hardly any Christians. I prefer Christ, even contaminated by Scotus, to this Jewish nonsense. . . . Would that the Christian Church did not rely so much on the Old Testament, which, although it was only given for a certain time and is full of shadows, is almost preferred to the Christian writings. And thus we turn from Christ, who alone suffices us.[4]

Erasmus was by nature a nomad. Never did he live as long as eight years consecutively in the same place.

[1] J. E. Sandys: *History of Classical Scholarship*, ii, 104 f.

[2] Allen, ep. 181. c. December, 1504.

[3] To Capito, March 13, 1518. Allen, ep. 798; Nichols, ep. 761.

[4] There is at Basle a copy of the *Psalterium Hebraicum* ed. by C. Pellican and S. Münster, with an introduction by Capito, Froben, 1516, which apparently belonged to Erasmus, his name having been inscribed in it by a contemporary. J. Ficker: "Hebräische Handpsalter Luthers," *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Phil. Hist. Klasse, 1919, no. 5, p. 4.

Having now spent six years, with considerable intervals, at Paris, he decided to return for a while to his native country. Here he lived for three years. Leaving Paris in May, 1501, he went first to see his old friends at Steyn, then to Haarlem to visit another old friend, William Herman, then to Dordrecht (June 9th). He next sojourned for a while at Brussels with the Bishop of Cambrai, and at Antwerp with his friend Voecht, after which he proceeded to the island of Walcheren near Flushing to stay with his patroness, Anne of Veere. She greeted him kindly, but was able to do little for him, being herself under surveillance for suspected complicity with the insubordinate Provost of Utrecht.[1] After a visit to Tournehem, he stayed for a while at the Abbey of St.-Bertin, in the town of St.-Omer, as the guest of his patron, Antony of Bergen. It is possible that he may have discharged secretarial duties for his host; at any rate there is extant a letter composed by Erasmus for Antony of Bergen to Cardinal John de' Medici, later Leo X.[2] Erasmus was housed in the cloister during the late summer and autumn of 1501; he passed the winter near St.-Omer at Courtebourne, the château of Florent, a nobleman of the famous family of Calonne; he then returned to St.-Bertin for the spring and summer of 1502.

The guardian of the Franciscan friary at St.-Omer was a certain John Vitrier who, though a Scotist, was a reformer in the earnestness of his life. Not being able to fulfil his desire of preaching the gospel to the heathen, he had turned his attention to the faults in the church at home, and had preached, in the Cathedral of Tournay, such scathing indictments of the unreformed convents, immoral clergy, and indulgences, which he said "came from hell," that his propositions were fastened upon as heretical and he was compelled by the Sorbonne to retract on October 2, 1498. Later he came into conflict with the Bishop of Boulogne, for he was one of those

[1] Allen, i, p. 357; Nichols, i, p. 317.
[2] Allen, ep. 162.

men persecuted by a world not worthy of him. Erasmus, learning to know and love him, preferred his character even to that of John Colet, for in Vitrier, he said, there was no trace of human weakness. It is thus that he wrote about him some years afterward:[1]

> He was a man of authority, of a presence so distinguished and elegant and a mind so lofty that nothing was more humane. He had been brought up on Scotist subtleties which he did not entirely disapprove, thinking they contained some wisdom in their mean words. On the other hand, he did not make much of them, especially after he had tasted Ambrose, Cyprian, and Jerome. He greatly admired what was sound in Origen without approving his heresy. He perfectly knew the Bible, and especially the epistles of Paul, which he could recite by heart. He prepared his sermons by reading Paul and by prayer. In his sermons he connected the gospel and epistle, avoiding citations from the fathers and the Canon Law. He had at one time wished to be a missionary and martyr, but was called back by a voice from heaven which promised him martyrdom at home. . . . He thought little of ceremonies, advising me to eat some meat in Lent for the sake of my health. He made everyone better, being especially successful in preparing them for death.

In the autumn of 1502 Erasmus settled at Louvain for about two years. Louvain was a large, fortified town, conveniently provided with canals for the transport of merchandise and adorned with spacious squares and splendid churches.[2] The university, founded in 1425, had by this time become one of the leading academies of Europe.[3] John Standonck, fresh from Montaigu, and Adrian of Utrecht, later Pope Adrian VI, had bought, on April 15, 1500, a college for poor students, founded in 1468, which was known, from its vicinity to "The Inn of the Pig," as the *Collegium Porci*. James Le Maçon (Latomus), a theologian of the conservative school, was

[1] Allen, ep. 1211. To Jonas, June 13, 1521. *Cf.* Allen, i, p. 372. On Vitrier, Renaudet: "Érasme," in *Revue Historique*, tome iii, p. 253; D'Argentrê: *Collectio judiciorum*, I, part ii, pp. 340–341; Gieseler: *Church History*, English translation by Hull, 1858, iii, 404.

[2] L. v. Pastor: "Die Reise Luigis d'Aragona" (*Ergänzungen und Erläuterungen zu Janssens Geschichte des Deutschen Volkes*, Band v, 4), 1908, p. 56.

[3] Rashdall: *Universities*, ii, 261, and 766 ff. On "Erasmus at Louvain," Foster Watson, *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1918.

LOUVAIN IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY
From an old print at the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris

made head of this institution.[1] Erasmus, who attended some lectures on theology given by Adrian of Utrecht,[2] was offered the position of instructor at the college, but, with his habitual independence, declined.[3]

The humanist of Rotterdam had by this time risen to sufficient prominence to be selected by the civic authorities as the proper person to present a congratulatory address to their sovereign, Philip the Handsome, Archduke of Austria and Duke of Burgundy, on his return to the Netherlands from Spain. The address, of which perhaps only a short portion was declaimed, while the rest was presented in book form under the appropriate title of *The Panegyric*, took place at the royal castle in Brussels on January 6, 1504. Philip was graciously pleased with the work and bestowed upon its author fifty livres as a token of favor.[4] The oration[5] was, inevitably, stuffed with fulsome laudation of the duke and all his relatives, which Erasmus defended in private as a necessary sugar-coating for the pill of good advice:

> For there is no more effective method of reforming a prince than setting before him, under the guise of praise, the example of a good monarch. . . . How, with more impunity, or with more severity, could you reprove a wicked prince better than by magnifying clemency in his person? How could you better animadvert on his rapacity, violence, or lust, than by lauding his benignity, moderation, and chastity?

Nor was this excuse wholly disingenuous. The orator did indeed inculcate a number of royal virtues, especially that of keeping the peace.

Erasmus continued to study at Louvain throughout the year 1504, during which time he received several

[1] Allen, i, p. 200; ii, p. xix. Godet: *La Congrégation de Montaigu*, p. 125.
[2] Erasmus to Adrian VI, August 1, 1522; LB. ep. 633, col. 723.
[3] Allen, epp. 172, 171. His name does not even appear in the matriculation book in these years; see H. de Voecht: "Excerpts from the Registers of Louvain University," *English Historical Review*, 1922, 89 ff.
[4] Allen, ep. 179 and introduction.
[5] LB. iv, 507 ff.

small subsidies or "alms" from the government.[1] He also made some money by composing epitaphs for wealthy patrons.[2]

While in the Netherlands Erasmus composed and published the work which, more than any other, gave a complete and rounded exposition of "the philosophy of Christ," as he loved to call the form of religion taught by him throughout life. For some years past piety had been a growing interest, until, from a small seed, it waxed a tree that overshadowed all other business of life, even that of enjoying and studying the classics. Erasmus was one of those happy natures that blossom and ripen into perfection ever so gradually. For him there was apparently no convulsion, no "conversion" such as stands at the head of many a prophet's career. No blinding light smote him to the ground, no revelation of the Holy Ghost taught him the secret of justification by faith, no visions of the Trinity dazzled his eyeballs. As a youth he had learned religion; even while, as a student at Paris, he found life gay rather than godly, his early poems and letters showed a slowly strengthening character and an ever deeper interest in the gospel. It is, perhaps, remarkable that with Standonck and "Gryllard" and the monks to make piety repulsive, and with Valla and Andrelinus to make irreligion attractive, he did not become a complete rationalist and Epicurean. Instead, he learned from both humanists and schoolmen, and never forgot the lesson that meticulous religiosity is horrible and that reason has her rights in weighing the claims of dogma.

The peculiar quality of the Erasmian ideal of an undogmatic religion and an ethical piety, founded alike on the Sermon on the Mount and on the teachings of Greek philosophy, was rooted in two schools with which

[1] Allen, ep. 181, introduction; and M. de Foronda y Aguilera: *Estancias y Viages del Emperador Carlos V*, 1914, p. 19: "A Fr. Erasmo agustino como limosna para ayudarle a pagar la escuela de Lovania donde estaba estudiando." Receipt of Finances, Lille, 1504.

[2] Allen, ep. 178, 51 n.

he early came in contact, that called the "devotio moderna" of the Brethren of the Common Life, and that of the Florentine Platonic Academy.[1] Widely different, indeed mutually hostile, as appeared the sources of the inspiration of the German mystics and of the Italian humanists, both agreed in asserting, against the stiffening of religion through dogma and organization, the claims of an inner, personal piety. The mystic, by emphasizing the rôle of the spirit, the other by cherishing the rights of reason, arrived at the point where theology and ritual alike were regarded as hindrances to the inner life, and where the ethical interest emerged uppermost. In the almost godless Valla on the one hand, and in God-intoxicated Tauler on the other, one finds a kindred ideal of Christianity as a life rather than a creed or a ceremony. Priest and sacrament shrank in importance before the assertion of the new individualism.

The deep piety of the German mystics permeated the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life, and left its traces in Erasmus's earliest writings, such as the *Antibarbari*, mainly concerned as they are with classical learning. Upon him, as little of a mystic as a religious man can be, the lesson was stamped that, as Thomas à Kempis had taught, the true worship of Christ was imitation of him, not verbal assent to a creed or exploitation of sacramental grace. Here, also, he learned that the pure philosophy of Christ was inwardly related to all the truths of antiquity, to the Stoic mastery of self and faith in predestination, to the Platonic idealism and other-worldliness. Plato, he soon discovered, was a theologian, Socrates a saint, Cicero inspired, and Seneca not far from Paul. "Their philosophy," he once said, "lies rather in the affections than in syllogisms; it is a

[1] On this see P. Mestwerdt: *Die Anfänge des Erasmus und die Devotio Moderna*, 1917; H. Ernst: "Die Frömmigkeit des Erasmus," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1919, pp. 46 ff; E. Troeltsch: *Die Kultur der Gegenwart: Geschichte der Christlichen Religion*, 1909, pp. 476 ff; P. Imbart de la Tour: *Les Origines de la Réforme*, ii, 413. J. Lindeboom: *Erasmus: Onderzoek naar zijne theologie en zijn godsdienstig Gemoedsbestaan*, 1909.

life more than a debate, an inspiration rather than a discipline; a transformation rather than a reasoning. What else, pray, is the philosophy of Christ?"[1]

The influence of the Platonic Academy of Florence and of its wonderfully beautiful soul, Pico della Mirandola, may have come to him first through Rudolph Agricola. Later he learned to know Pico through his disciples Thomas More and John Colet; finally he read his works.[2] Of equal or more value to his spiritual development was the friendship of those choice and master spirits of the time, More, Colet, and Vitrier, men who, while making light of ceremonies and scholastic subtleties, beautified religion by holiness. But among all these sources of devotion and of moral aspiration the first and greatest was he who had been meek and lowly of heart, the supreme inspiration of all the ages, the man whose tragic and beautiful life has been the finest and noblest thing in human history. Turning to the gospel Erasmus drew his own conclusions, that religion was a life, not a creed, still less a set of prescribed rules and ceremonies. The life was that taught by the example of Jesus and by the Sermon on the Mount. Here, not in Plato nor in Pico nor even in Paul, did the humanist find his truest inspiration.

In working out a consistent system, Erasmus was confronted by two problems, that of cult and that of dogma. His attitude to the former was to let it alone, relying on holiness of character to purify and vivify it. "External worship is not condemned," he wrote in his *Enchiridion*, "but God is pleased only by the inward piety of the worshipper." Luther, and still more Calvin, reformed the ceremonies and rites of the Church according to their conceptions of Biblical precedent and precept; Erasmus had no such design, and for many reasons. In the first place he was too historical-minded not to cherish traditional forms. Secondly, he was under no bibliolatrous

[1] *Paraclesis*, LB. v, 141. *Cf.* also Allen, ep. 1062.
[2] So he says in the *Ciceronianus*, LB. i, 1009.

prepossession, such as would lead him to regard everything not sanctioned by a specific text as wrong. Thirdly, he was unwilling to give offense, and finally, he regarded the whole matter of cult as one of subordinate concern. Fasting, sacerdotal celibacy, the communion in one kind, and all the rest of the Church law did no harm, if stress were not put upon such matters.

In the face of dogma Erasmus was a child of the Renaissance. It is too much to say either that he neglected it or regarded it as of minor importance; but it is conspicuously true that with him dogma had not the supreme place that it had with the Reformers and with the inquisitors. While at times he hovered on the verge of doubt of some doctrines, or admitted the possibility of doubt in others without the brand of heresy, yet he always sought and finally yielded to the authority of the Bible, and, in the second place, to that of the Church, as the voice of either could be reasonably interpreted.[1] As with other men, so with Erasmus, we find slight inconsistencies and variations in his statements. But on the whole his attitude is plain, and it is far more modern than was that of the Reformers. He welcomed criticism and philosophy as aids to religion; they dreaded reason as a foe to faith.[1]

All these ideas found perfect expression in a little work of devotion, the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, or the *Handbook* (or *Dagger*, the word has a double meaning) *of the Christian Knight*. Erasmus, who always knew how to invest his books with a personal interest, tells how this was written at the request of a lady who wished to reform her husband, a great noble, jovial, hot-tempered, dissipated, and completely illiterate. His name was John, and the author remained on friendly terms with him for many years, but his exact identity has never yet been put beyond doubt. Possibly he was a certain John de Trazegnies, who was decorated with the order of the Golden Fleece in November, 1516, and who owned

[1] Lindeboom, *passim*, and especially pp. 156 ff.

estates in Artois. At any rate, the book was begun at Tournehem in Artois in 1501, and the dedication written at St.-Omer, in the autumn of the same year.[1]

The title, *Enchiridion*, is borrowed from Epictetus, or from Augustine, who applied it to small treatises on things especially necessary to salvation. Luther later took the word as the designation of his shorter catechism.[2] The idea of the Christian Knight had been a common one in the Middle Ages, being derived from the comparison of the Christian life to warfare.[3] The Latin translation of Job vii:1, is, "Militia est vita hominis super terram," an interpretation followed by the early German versions, which rendered "militia" by "Ritterschaft."[4] St. Paul, in the sixth chapter of Ephesians, fully describes the armor of faith, and alludes to it elsewhere. The idea had been further developed in the Middle Ages, especially by the mystic Suso (1295–1366). The official title of the Knights Templars was "Pauperes Commilitones Christi templique Salamonis," and it is noteworthy that one of their founders, Godeffroi de St.-Omer, came from the same place from which Erasmus now wrote his introduction. The phrase "Knight of Christ" after 1450 had become a catchword in German religious life. Certain saints had been honored as *Milites Christi*, in which character two had been depicted between 1420 and 1432 in the famous altarpiece of the Van Eycks at Ghent, which was probably seen by Erasmus. Even Valla once called himself "a Christian knight."

The first chapter of the *Enchiridion* carefully works out this idea of the warfare of life, while the second describes the arms of the Christian, and the third

[1] Allen, ep. 164. Text of the work, LB. v, 1 ff. *Cf.* Allen, i, pp. 19, 20; Nichols, i, 337, 376.

[2] On the name, Du Cange: *Glossarium mediæ et infimæ latinitatis, s. v.*

[3] P. Weber: *Albrecht Dürers Weltanschauung* (1909). H. Bergner: "Der christliche Ritter in der Dichtung und bildender Kunst," *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde*, N. F. 6, 1915, 237 ff.

[4] "Das leben des menschen ist eine ritterschaft auf der Erde," in version of 1466, reprinted by W. Kurrelmeyer: *Der erste deutsche Bibel*, 1910. Luther's version was: "Muss nicht der Mensch immer in Streit sein auf Erden?"

differentiates true from false wisdom. The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters contain the kernel of the book, the distinction between the inner and the outer man: the flesh and the spirit, the sensual and the moral, external observances and internal righteousness. Fasting, without a spirtual intent, may be a more carnal work than eating, and the worship of the saints is often ignorant and selfish:

> There are those who worship certain heavenly powers with special rites. One salutes Christopher daily, though only when he sees his image, because he has persuaded himself that on such days he will be insured against an evil death. Another worships St. Roch—but why? Because he thinks to drive away the plague. Another mumbles prayers to Barbara or George, lest he fall into the hands of an enemy. This man vows to Apollonia to fast in order to escape toothache; that one gazes on the image of St. Job to get rid of the itch. Some give part of their profits to the poor in order to keep their business from mishap; some light candles to Jerome to restore a business already bad.[1]

Such a cult of the saints is declared to be on a par with idolatry; the names of Hercules, Æsculapius and Neptune are changed, but the spirit of the devotee is the same. "The true way to worship the saints is to imitate their virtues, and they care more for this than for a hundred candles. . . . You venerate the bones of Paul laid away in a shrine, but not the mind of Paul, enshrined in his writings." The writer then goes on to discuss the tripartite nature of man, the divine spirit, the animal flesh, the human soul. He closes by drawing a number of practical applications of his principles, especially denouncing the evils of war.

The *Enchiridion*, first published at Antwerp in 1503,[2] did not at once attract much attention. A reprint was not called for until 1509, nor a third printing until 1515. After this new editions came almost every year for a long period; it was translated into Czech in 1519, into Dutch

[1] LB. v, 23. A similar passage in the *Praise of Folly*, LB. iv, 450.

[2] For the editions see *Bibliotheca Belgica, s. v. Erasmus, Enchiridion.* Allen, i, pp. 229, 373.

in 1524, Spanish 1527, Italian 1531, Portuguese 1541, Polish 1585, and Russian 1783. It found famous translators in the three great modern languages. William Tyndale was probably the author of the English version appearing without date (1518) as *Enchiridion militis Christiani, which maye be called in Englishe the hansome Weapon of the Christian Knight.* George Spalatin made a German version in 1521, and the French reformer, Louis de Berquin, put it into his mother tongue in 1529.

It had a deep influence on the more spiritually minded men of the day. Albert Dürer knew it and may have had it in mind when he made his famous woodcut, "The Knight, Death, and the Devil."[1] Jerome Emser, a distinguished Catholic theologian, spoke highly of it, and apparently superintended an edition of 1515.[2] Luther knew it through and through. His sermons and letters of 1516 and later have many echoes of the passage on the worship of saints, translated above.[3] Luther's famous work, *The Liberty of a Christian Man*, has a striking resemblance to the *Enchiridion*, both in its leading thought of the distinction between the inner and outer man,[4] and in the idea of the universal priesthood of believers as worked out from the New Testament by Erasmus.[5]

[1] Dated 1513; he alludes to the *Enchiridion* in 1521. See *Dürers Schriftliche Nachlass*, ed. Heidrich, 1908, p. 100.

[2] Allen, ep. 553; *Bibliotheca Belgica.*

[3] Sermons, July 27, 1516 (*Luthers Werke*, Weimar, i, 62); February 2, 1517, *ibid.*, i, 130; *cf.* also i, 420 and iv, 636. Most of all the sermon of December 4, 1517; *ibid.*, iv, 639, and in a sermon preached in 1516, but retouched for publication in 1518, *ibid.*, 411–426. Here Luther advances on Erasmus and says: "In our time the cult of the saints has gone so far that it would be better if their days were not kept, nor their names known at all." *Cf.* further a passage in a letter of December 31, 1517, Enders: *Luthers Briefwechsel*, i, 136; L.C. ep. 46.

[4] *Cf.* chapters 4 and 6, of the *Enchiridion*, with *Luthers Werke*, vii, 12 ff and 39 ff.

[5] *Cf.* LB. v, 47, with *Luthers Werke*, vii, 24.

CHAPTER III

ENGLISH FRIENDS

ERASMUS made at least six visits to England, the first lasting from June to December, 1499, the second from the autumn of 1505 to August, 1506, the third from about October, 1509, to July, 1514, the fourth in May, 1515; the fifth in the summer of 1516; the sixth a brief visit in April, 1517. He sometimes wished that England were joined to the Continent by a bridge, for "he hated the wild waves and the still wilder sailors."[1] Indeed, in that age the passage was far worse than it is now, when it is still so much disliked. Bad weather and storms often caused delays of many days, or even weeks before the small boats, sixty feet in length, dared to venture forth. The time required was greater than it now is, and accommodation and food for the passengers, of whom seventy were taken at a time, were poor.[2]

The first trip was made in the company, and probably at the invitation, of Lord Mountjoy, whom Erasmus had been tutoring in Paris. The young nobleman, though still a minor, had been married for more than two years, but his child wife remained in the custody of her father, Sir William Say. It was to the estate of this gentleman, at Bedwell in Hertfordshire,[3] that Mountjoy and his tutor first repaired. Erasmus was delighted beyond words by his reception here, and pleased with Mountjoy's bride and her kind father.[4] Charmed with the blandish-

[1] Allen, ep. 756, January 7, 1518.

[2] E. S. Bates: *Touring in 1600* (1911), p. 64, and the account of Casaubon's passage in 1610, M. Pattison: *Casaubon*,[2] 1892, pp. 274 ff.

[3] Nichols, i, p. 200; Allen, i, p. 238. Enthoven, ep. 12 (January 28, 1528, not as dated in Enthoven).

[4] Allen, ep. 115; Nichols, ep. 104.

ments of that most pleasant of all resorts, an English country house, he almost threw aside his studies.[1] He himself also made a good impression on his hosts. A young man who visited Bedwell twenty-nine years later found that "it was still full of memories of Erasmus."[2] The enthusiasm of the young Dutchman was reflected in one of his gayest letters to his gay friend, Faustus Andrelinus.[3]

We, too, have made progress in England. The Erasmus you knew has almost become a good hunter, no bad rider, a courtier of some skill, bows with politeness, smiles with grace, and all this in spite of his nature. What of it? We are getting on. If you are wise, you, too, will fly over here. Why should a man with a nose like yours grow old among those French "merdes."[4] But you will say your gout detains you. The devil take your gout if he will only leave *you!* Nevertheless, did you but know the blessings of Britain, you would run hither with winged feet and if the gout stopped you you would wish yourself another Dædalus.

To take one attraction out of many; there are nymphs here with divine features, so gentle and kind that you would easily prefer them to your Camenæ. Besides, there is a fashion which cannot be commended enough. Wherever you go you are received on all hands with kisses; when you leave you are dismissed with kisses; if you go back your salutes are returned to you. When a visit is paid, these sweets are served; and when guests depart kisses are shared again; whenever a meeting takes place there is kissing in abundance; in fact, whatever way you turn you are never without it. Oh Faustus, if you had once tasted how soft and fragrant those kisses are, you would wish to be a traveler, not for ten years, like Solon, but for your whole life, in England.

The habit which pleased Erasmus so much was indeed noticed by many travelers in Britain at this time,[5] and the coaxing young man, "most inclined to love,"[6] as he

[1] Allen, ep. 136, line 46, referring to the whole visit in England.

[2] Enthoven, ep. 12.

[3] Allen, ep. 103; Nichols, ep. 98. Summer, 1499.

[4] This word "merda," though found in Horace, was hardly in decent usage. Erasmus quoted it from one of Faustus's own poems.

[5] Some references given in Nichols, i, p. 204; more in Mrs. H. Cust; *Gentlemen Errant*, 1909, pp. 42, 496–498. The same freedom of kissing pretty women was noted by Balcus in his *Description of Switzerland* (1500–04), quoted in S. M. Jackson: *U. Zwingli*, 1900, p. 16.

[6] Allen, ep. 107, October, 1499.

called himself, would be likely to make the most of his opportunities.

From Bedwell Erasmus went with Mountjoy to the latter's country house at Greenwich. Here he met young Thomas More, later destined to prove himself, by his noble *Utopia* and by his courageous resistance to tyranny, the chief ornament of his country. Among the friends of More, Erasmus met also a certain Arnold, who may perhaps be identified with Richard Arnold, a citizen of London, who died in 1521, and whose *Chronicle*, published in the Netherlands in 1502, furnishes information about the coinage and tolls of Flanders, but is chiefly remembered for containing the famous ballad "The Nut-Brown Maid."[1] Through the good offices of More, Erasmus was taken to Eltham Palace, near Greenwich, and presented to the children of Henry VII, all but Arthur, who was away being educated. "In the midst of the group," says the visitor, "stood Prince Henry, then nine years old, and having already something royal in his demeanor, in which loftiness of mind was combined with singular culture. On his right was Margaret, about eleven years old, afterward married to James, King of Scots, and on his left played Mary, a child of four. Edmund was an infant in arms."[2] More presented a complimentary address or poem to Prince Henry; but Erasmus was unprepared, and angry at his companion for not having warned him, especially as the boy sent him a little note challenging something from his pen. Immediately on returning home he wrote a poem entitled *Prosopopoeia Britanniae Majoris*,[3] in which Britain speaks her own praises and those of her king. It was printed, with a flattering introductory letter to

[1] On Arnold, see *Dictionary of National Biography*, and J. M. Berdan; *Early Tudor Poetry*, 1920, pp. 153 f.

[2] Allen, i, p. 6; Nichols, i, p. 201. The scene here described has been made the subject of a beautiful painting by Frank Cadogan Cowper, in the Houses of Parliament. More is kneeling, presenting Henry with his writing; while Erasmus stands behind More to the left.

[3] LB i, 1213 ff.

Prince Henry[1] in the first edition of the *Adages* (1500). The letter concludes with an exhortation to literary studies, and a complimentary allusion to Skelton, "that incomparable light and ornament of British letters." As Skelton is also mentioned in the poem itself,[2] and as he was tutor to Prince Henry at this time, Erasmus must have met him. For the poet, whose works he could not enjoy, as they were nearly all in English, he wrote a laudatory lyric which he never published possibly because Skelton did not on his side produce anything in praise of the author, though he apparently wrote something, or was expected to do so. The verse, which has remained unpublished until the present,[3] may be translated as follows:

O Skelton, worthy of eternal fame,
Why should thy fount of speech pour on my name
The meed of praise, for I have never sought
Pierian grottos, nor drunk water brought
From the Aonian fountain, liquor which
The lips of poets ever doth enrich.
But unto thee Apollo gave his lyre,
Thou playest the strings taught by the Muses' choir;
Persuasion lies like honey on thy tongue
Given by Calliope, and thou hast sung
A song more sweet than dying swan's by far,
And Orpheus self yields thee his own guitar,
And when thou strik'st it savage beasts grow mild,
Thou leadest oaks and stayest torrents wild,
And with thy soul-enchanting melodies
Thou meltest rocks. The debt that ancient Greece
To Homer owed, to Vergil Mantua,
That debt to Skelton owes Britannia,
For he from Latium all the muses led,
And taught them to speak English words instead
Of Latin; and with Skelton England tries
With Roman poets to contend the prize.

[1] Allen, ep. 104; Nichols, ep. 97.

[2] Iam puer Henricus genitoris nomine laetus Monstrante fonteis vate Skeltone sacros. (LB. i, 1216.)

[3] Original in British Museum, Egerton MS. 1651, fol. 6 f. For text see Appendix III.

By autumn Erasmus was found at Oxford, staying at St. Mary's College, a house founded in 1435 to enable young Austin canons to study at the university. The prior was a certain learned and virtuous Richard Charnock.[1] A banquet, almost a Platonic symposium, in which Erasmus participated, is described by him in the following letter[2] to his friend, John Sixtin, a fellow countryman then also at Oxford:

How I wish you had been present, as I expected, at that last feast of ours, a feast of reason than which nothing was ever sweeter, cleaner, or more delicious. Nothing was wanting. A choice time, a choice place, no arrangements neglected and fine little men, as Varro says.[3] The good cheer would have satisfied Epicurus; the table talk would have pleased Pythagoras. The little men were so fine that they might have peopled an Academy, and not merely made up a dinner party. First, there was Prior Richard Charnock, that high priest of the Graces; then the divine who had preached the Latin sermon that day, a person of modesty as well as learning; then your friend Philip, most cheerful and witty. Colet, assertor and champion of the old theology, was at the head of the table.

In December, Erasmus returned to London and prepared to depart from England. He summed up his impressions of the land to his old friend Robert Fisher, then in Italy. The letter, perhaps, was intended for general perusal:[4]

But you will ask how I like England. Believe me, my Robert, when I say that I never liked anything so much before. I have found the climate here most agreeable and salubrious; and I have met with so much civility, and so much learning, not hackneyed and trivial, but deep, accurate, ancient, Latin and Greek, that but for curiosity I do not now much care whether I see Italy or not. When I hear my Colet I seem to be listening to Plato himself. In Grocin who does not marvel at such a perfect world of learning? What can be more acute, profound, and delicate than the judgment of Linacre? What has nature ever created more gentle, sweet, or happy than the genius of Thomas More?

[1] Allen, ep. 106.
[2] Allen, ep. 116; Nicholas, ep. 205, November, 1499.
[3] Varro, *Men.* 335.
[4] Allen, ep. 118; Nichols, ep. 110.

On January 27, 1500, Erasmus was at Dover, about to embark for Boulogne,[1] but at the port he had an unpleasant experience. All his money was confiscated in accordance with the English law that no coin might be exported from the realm.[2] This injury he never either forgot or forgave, occasionally using the word "English" as a synonym for "rapacious."[3]

At Boulogne he was also rigorously searched, but the fact that he had nothing left prevented him from losing anything more. Via Tournehem and Amiens he journeyed to Paris. At the little inn at St.-Just-en-chaussée he and his English companion tried in vain to procure a room to themselves. They were sure that the gentleman who shared their room was a robber and they waited like victims for the sacrifice, watching and sleeping by turns. At length Erasmus arising at five o'clock on the cold morning of February 2d, and finding that his sword had been removed from his bedside, aroused the household and insisted on starting away at once. A long dispute over the bill and the coins offered by the guests was followed by another tedious argument over the horses. So much for the pleasures of touring in the sixteenth century![4]

The hope of a benefice drew Erasmus to England for a second time in the summer or autumn of 1505. A living had indeed been promised by Henry VII,[5] and so vivid was Erasmus's expectation of it that he took the trouble to get a dispensation from Pope Julius II[6] to meet any difficulties that might arise from his illegitimacy. This dispensation, which closely resembled that later

[1] Allen, i, p. 274.

[2] Allen, i, p. 16; Nichols, i, p. 227.

[3] Allen, ep. 123. In contemporary French literature "Anglais" was a name applied to a creditor. It is so found in Guillaume Crêtin (c. 1500) and in Jodelle (1552). *Cf.* E. Fournier: *Le Théâtre Français au XVIe et XVIIe siècle*, s. d., p. 56, note.

[4] Allen, epp. 119, 120; Nichols, epp. 122, 111. Allen, iv, p. xxi.

[5] Allen, ep. 189; Nichols, ep. 188; April, 1506.

[6] This dispensation, dated January 4, 1506, in Allen, ep. 187a, iii, p. xxix.

granted by Leo X,[1] was doubtless, like that, procured through the assistance of powerful friends at court. The Holy Father wrote his beloved son that the latter's "zeal for religion, honesty of life and character, and other laudable merits, probity, and virtue, for which you have been commended to us by faithful testimony, have induced us to show you special grace and favor," consisting of an absolution from all defects inherent in illegitimacy and the right to hold certain benefices in England. Erasmus's hope, however, of obtaining one of these, was disappointed at this time.

At London he lodged either with Foxe, Bishop of Winchester, or with Fisher, Bishop of Rochester.[2] With the latter he formed an intimacy which lasted through life. John Fisher was in 1506 about fifty-five years old. He had been made Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University in 1501, and had worked energetically to infuse life into that then somewhat torpid institution. In 1503 he had been appointed to the chair of divinity by its founder, the king's mother, Lady Margaret Tudor, Countess of Richmond, and a year later had become Chancellor of the University. On April 12, 1505, he was made president of Queen's College, an office which he held for three years. On meeting Erasmus in London at this time he probably took him up to Cambridge and offered him a professorship. The markedly humanistic bias of the statutes of Queen's drawn up at this time certainly shows the influence of the Dutch scholar.[3] Erasmus petitioned for and received permission to study for a doctorate in theology, but he soon gave up the idea in order to go to Italy. The grace granted him by the university shows that he was expected to lecture on Paul's Epistle to the Romans.[4]

[1] Allen, ep. 517; Nichols, ep. 499. January 26, 1517.

[2] Allen, ep. 185, note.

[3] On Fisher, *Dictionary of National Biography*, and life by Bridgett, 1880. On Erasmus at Cambridge, Allen, i, pp. 590–593.

[4] *Grace Book Γ containing the records of the University of Cambridge*, 1501–42, ed. W. G. Searle, 1908, p. 46, Grace dated 1505–06.

But when Erasmus returned again to England some years later Cambridge was more successful in getting his services. He arrived in England in the autumn of 1509, and for a year and a half afterward his life is shrouded in mystery. Part of the time was spent at More's house, part with Andrew Ammonius, an Italian of Lucca, Latin secretary first to Lord Mountjoy and then to Henry VIII.[1] Though Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, resigned the presidency of Queen's College, Cambridge, in 1508, he still continued to be Chancellor of the university. Regarding the co-operation of Erasmus as necessary to carry through the humanistic program he had at heart, in the summer of 1511[2] he secured the appointment of his friend as lecturer in Greek. Not long after this (about November) Erasmus accepted the chair of divinity founded in 1503 at Cambridge by Lady Margaret Tudor, and began to lecture on Jerome, and probably on other subjects. One of his pupils, Robert Aldridge, later wrote him that the semester spent under him, introducing both the serious and the pleasant side of literary study, was more profitable than years with other teachers.[3] Another of his pupils at this time was probably William Tyndale,[4] later the famous reformer and translator of the Bible. Something of Erasmus's spirit towards his work may be seen in the following conversation reported by himself.[5]

You will laugh, I know, at what I tell now. When I said something about an under teacher, a man of some reputation said with a smile: "Who would submit to pass his life in a school among boys who could live in any fashion whatever elsewhere?" I answered softly that I thought it a highly honorable office to bring up youth in virtue and learning; that Christ had not despised that age upon which kindness is best bestowed and from which the richest harvest

[1] Allen, i, p. 455.

[2] Allen, epp. 242, 229. On the lectures, ep. 233. On a request from the university to Lord Mountjoy to contribute to Erasmus's salary, Allen, i, p. 613; Nichols, ii, pp. 73, 88.

[3] Enthoven, ep. 40. (1526?)

[4] A. W. Pollard: *Records of the English Bible*, 1911, p. 4.

[5] Allen, ep. 237; Nichols, ep. 231.

might be expected, as indeed it is the seed-plot and planting-ground of the commonwealth. I added that any really pious person would be of opinion that there was no duty by which he could better serve God than by drawing children to Christ. He sneered and said: "If anyone was so bent on serving Christ he had better go into a convent and become 'religious.'" I replied that Paul places true religion in offices of charity, and that charity consists in doing all the good we can to our neighbors.

From his professorship Erasmus received thirteen pounds a year in addition to board and lodging, but he was not allowed to take fees from the students, according to their customary practice—an abstention of which he later made a virtue.[1] With John Fisher he continued on terms of intimacy until death parted them. In August, 1516, he visited him at Rochester for about ten days in order "to translate him into Greek,"—*i.e.*, to give him lessons in that tongue.[2] It was at this time that he became well acquainted with the bishop's library, which he describes as its owner's paradise.[3] While he earned some money by teaching and writing, he received most from patrons. In November, 1511, he returned from a visit to London with a purse stuffed with seventy-two nobles.[4] He had no false delicacy in requesting financial assistance, though he was occasionally snubbed for his pains, even by his good friend Colet.[5] From another patron, Andrew Ammonius of Lucca, a humanist who had sought and made his fortune in England as a Latin secretary, Erasmus received frequent presents of wine.[6] He greatly appreciated these, and soon became intimate with Ammonius as a kindred spirit. Not only is their correspondence extant, but there is also preserved a poem of the Italian humanist in acknowledgment of a gift of the sweetmeat then called marchpane. Ammonius

[1] Allen, ep. 296, i, p. 569.
[2] Allen, ep. 452; Nichols, ep. 438.
[3] To Fisher, September 4, 1524, Lond. xviii, 47; LB. ep. 698.
[4] Allen, ep. 241.
[5] Allen, epp. 225, 227, 230, 237.
[6] Allen, epp. 226, 228, 234, 236, 238, 240.

declares that he has never found anything nicer or sweeter than that cake, which has long been esteemed at the pope's table, save only the witty conversation of Erasmus.[1]

In order to further his own advancement Erasmus was not above practicing the usual arts of suitors, which he wittily describes.[2] He was able in 1511 to bid up his price in the English market by showing a letter[3] promising him a benefice in Brabant; he used this to get an appointment to an English living in the gift of William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, with whose praises his letters at this time ring.[4] Erasmus had met Warham, perhaps through Colet's introduction, in January, 1506, or shortly before. At the first interview he presented the prelate with a translation from Lucian and received in return a present which hardly came up to his hopes.[5] However, Warham proved one of his most constant patrons in after-life. Of his pressing attentions Erasmus says:[6]

> It is often our own fault that friendships are broken. . . . As a youth I offended grievously. For had I then met the advances of great men who began to take me up, I should have been something in the literary world; but an immoderate love of liberty caused me to contend for a long time with perfidious friends and with dire poverty. Nor should I ever have ceased doing so had not

[1] The poems of Ammonius are printed in an extremely rare volume, of which a copy is at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. I take this, however, from the MS. transcript at the Public Record Office, on which see *Calendar of State Papers of Henry VIII*, 2d ed. by Brodie, i, App. 5, anno 1509. The poem reads:

Ad Erasmum Theologum messo crustulo quod marsium panem vocant.

Nil mi lautius esse suaviusque
Mensis pontificum est diu probatum
Unum sed modo dulcius repertum
Argute eloquium tuum est, Erasme!

[2] Allen, ep. 250; Nichols, ep. 241.

[3] Allen, ep. 244a; Nichols, ep. 406, anno 1516.

[4] Allen, epp. 243, 252, November, 1911, and February, 1512. *Cf.* ep. 334, May, 1515.

[5] Allen, i, p. 5, and ep. 188.

[6] *Adagia*, chil. 4, cent. 5, prov. 1 (1515.) LB. ii, 1050.

William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, a man not more reverend for his title and office than for his noble virtues worthy of a prelate, lured me, fleeing as it were from him, into the net of his friendship.

Warham did indeed appreciate the worth of the Dutch scholar and wrote him, while he was in Italy, offering him money if he would consent to spend the rest of his life in England.[1] When Erasmus did return to London Warham took him up and, hearing that he had a cold, sent him twenty gold "angels," as the English coins were called from the image of an angel stamped on them, hoping that among them would be found Raphael the physician of salvation who would heal the sick man and restore him to his former health.[2] The same loving patron collated him, on March 22, 1512, to the rectory of Aldington in Kent, worth thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence a year;[3] as money would then buy at least ten times what it does now, this income would be the equivalent of some $1,600 nowadays.

As the appointee had no intention of performing the duties connected with this office, and was, indeed, on account of his ignorance of English, unable to do so, he scrupled a little at accepting it. Warham, however, urged that he did more good by his books, which taught many preachers, than he would perform by personal ministrations in a small parish.[4] Later, in deference to his wishes, Warham changed the living for a pension,[5] charged on the revenues of the parish, at the same time protesting that it was never his habit to burden churches with payments to absentees but that he felt

[1] Allen, ep. 214. There dated May, 1509. In Geldenhauer's *Collectanea*, ed. Prinsen, 1901, pp. 19 f, it is dated 1521.

[2] Allen, ep. 240a; iii, p. xxxi, November 11, 1511. On Raphael the Physician, *Luthers Werke* (Weimar), xxxviii, 280 ff.

[3] W. Vischer: *Erasmiana* (1876), ii, 1, p. 8. Erasmus's acceptance of the benefice through four men appointed to act as attorneys (procuratores, actores, factores negotiorum et nuncii speciales), *ibid.*, ii, 2. On the value of the benefice, Allen, i, p. 501.

[4] In the *Ecclesiastes*, 1535, LB. v, 811 f; Nichols, ii, p. 64.

[5] Vischer, II, 3, p. 13.

constrained to make an exception of Erasmus, "a most consummate master of Latin and Greek, who like a star ornaments our times with his learning and eloquence," and who, moreover, prefers England to Italy, France, or Germany. Wherefore he was granted a pension of twenty pounds per annum from the revenues of Aldington. This stipend, regularly paid throughout the rest of Erasmus's life, was perhaps his most dependable source of income. The archbishop also procured for Erasmus exemption from the higher tax normally paid by foreigners appointed to English benefices.[1]

Though there is no positive evidence to show that Erasmus ever visited his parish, he may have done so at the time when he made a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury.[2] His own interesting account of this trip in the *Colloquies*, is worth transcribing. He was accompanied by Colet, whose name is rendered as "Gratian Pullus, an Englishman of note and authority, who, though probably not a follower of Wyclif, had read his books."[3]

"The church dedicated to St. Thomas," he says, "rises so majestically into the air, as to strike even the distant beholder with religious awe. Two vast towers seem to greet the pilgrim as he approaches, while the pealing of their bells echoes far and wide over the country. In the south porch are three statues of

[1] The archbishop's mandate reprinted in A. T. Bannister: *Registrum Caroli Bothi Episcopi Herefordensis, 1516-35.* 1921, p. 246.

[2] Allen, i, p. 501.

[3] There is no special reason to place this visit at Easter, 1506, as Renaudet *Revue Historique*, cxi, 1912, p. 260, does, because the court made the pilgrimage then. On Erasmus's trip, see *Peregrinatio religionis erga.* LB. i, 684 f, and 783 f. *Cf. Modus orandi*, LB. v, 1120. J. H. Lupton (*Life of Colet*, 1887, p. 206) puts this trip "presumably in 1514," but the time cannot be determined with accuracy. I borrow freely from his translation of the colloquy, and from his excellent notes. He explains the name given Colet as follows: Gratianus is John, because John means "grace." Pullus, he says, is derived from the dark color of Colet's clothes, "vestimentis pullis." But I believe pullus was used in the sense of "young animal" and stood for "colt." The identification is certain, as Colet is mentioned as Erasmus's comrade in this pilgrimage in the *Modus orandi*, v, 1119 f.

armed men, they who impiously murdered the saint." Their names, he goes on to say, were Tuscus, Fuscus, and Berrus, thus distorting the names of three of the four reputed assassins, Tracy, Fitz-Urse, and Brito. After more details about the appearance of the church he continues:

On the altar is the point of the sword with which the archbishop's skull was cloven. We religiously kissed its sacred rust, on account of our love for the martyr. Entering the crypt, the skull itself was displayed to us, incased in silver, though with a part at the top left bare to be kissed. . . . There also are hung up in the dark the hair shirts, girdles, and bands with which that prelate used to subdue the flesh. The very appearance of them made us shudder, such a reproach were they to our luxurious softness. Thence we returned into the choir, on the north side of which are repositories for relics. When these were unlocked, from them were produced an amazing quantity of bones: skulls, jawbones, teeth, hands, fingers, and arms, all of which we adoringly kissed, until my companion, a man less well disposed to this department of religion than I could have wished, not over politely refused to kiss an arm which had bleeding flesh still attached to it. . . .

Next, the pilgrims were shown the immense store of costly vestments and precious metals bestowed on the shrine by pious persons. At this point Colet burst out again.

"Is it true, good father," said he, "that St. Thomas was very good to the poor?" "Most true," replied the other, and began to relate many instances of his bounty. . . . "Then," continued Colet, "since the saint was so liberal to the destitute when he was himself poor and in need of money, do you not think that now, being so rich and having no use for money, that he would take it patiently if some poor woman, for instance, with starving children or a sick husband, and destitute of all support, were to ask pardon and then take some small part of the great riches we see for the relief of her family? . . . I, for my part, am quite convinced that the saint would even rejoice at being the means, in death as in life, of assisting by his riches the destitution of the poor." At this the attendant began to knit his brows and glare at us, and I have no doubt would have turned us contumeliously out, had he not learned that we had an introduction from the archbishop. I pacified him as best I could, telling him that my companion never meant a word he said, but was only joking, and at the same time I put a few shillings into the box.

Next the sacristy was visited, and more relics exhibited. The guide had the poor judgment to offer Colet as a souvenir a handkerchief once used by the saint to wipe the sweat from his brow and to blow his nose, and showing plainly signs of the use to which it had been put. Colet regarded it with a derisive whistle and turned contemptuously away. As they were leaving, an old man offered them St. Thomas's shoe to be kissed, whereupon Colet flared up with: "What do the dolts mean? Next they will bring us his excrements to kiss."

Though Erasmus represents himself as deeply mortified at his friend's manners, he tells the story in a way that shows he appreciated the humor of the scene. There was never a drier wit than his; no writer has ever had such a gift of ridiculing a usage while pretending to hold up his hands in holy horror at the profanity of those who did the like. I have no doubt, though it is hard to prove it or to bring it out clearer in the translation, that Erasmus saw the absurdity of kissing the sword which clove the archbishop's skull, just as Luther later made fun of the exhibition of the cord with which Judas hanged himself as a relic in Rome.[1] In fact it seems not unfair to say that during the exhibition of the relics, while Colet fumed Erasmus tittered. The two attitudes were becoming general in Europe, and were both ominous of the Protestant revolt.

In the summer of 1512 Erasmus made a pilgrimage to our Lady of Walsingham, also described in the *Colloquies*.[2] This shrine, in the northern part of Norfolk, about sixty miles from Cambridge, ranked with Loretto and Compostella as one of the most famous in Europe, and was served by the Austin canons of Walsingham priory. Erasmus, called Ogygius in the Colloquy, was

[1] De Wette: *Luthers Briefe*, vi, 322.

[2] LB. i, 778 ff. *Peregrinatio religionis erga.* Allen, ep. 262 and note. See also *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, x, 20.

accompanied by Robert Aldridge, a student who was enthusiastic about his teaching. There they beheld among other relics St. Peter's knuckle and the milk of the Virgin still liquid and saw her statue nod.[1] Erasmus hung up a votive hymn in Greek iambics, declaring that, having no gold, silver, and precious stones, such as other pilgrims heap on her shrine, he offered her the best that he had, a song.[2]

While living as a student and teacher at Cambridge Erasmus did not entirely neglect the lighter side of life. He continued the equestrian exercise spoken of to Faustus Andrelinus in the first letter from England.[3] Ascham, who went to Cambridge in 1530, heard from Garret a tradition that "when Erasmus had been sore at his boke, for lacke of better exercise he would take his horse and ride to Market Hill and come agayne."[4] Incidentally this story shows that the professor was living in comfortable style.

While at Cambridge Erasmus perhaps learned to know the neighboring nuns of the convent of St. Clara at Denny. At any rate we find him later in correspondence with them. In a letter first printed in 1528[5] he thanks them for their love and gifts and says he is glad that his former letter pleased them. He sends them a little flower culled from the ever-green garden of Isaiah—*i.e.*, a little sermon on the text, "In silence and hope will be your strength."

Erasmus was too restless to be content with any position long. After lecturing at Cambridge for about two years he gave up the work and shortly after left England for the Continent. The pension of Warham, as well as the enormous gifts of that prelate and others,

[1] These nodding images were common, and a little later were ruthlessly exposed when Henry VIII visited the monasteries. *Cf.* Lindsay: *History the Reformation*, ii, 1907, pp. 343 ff.

[2] LB. v, 1325.

[3] Allen, ep. 103.

[4] Ascham: *Toxophilus*, ed. Arber, p. 46. Allen, i, p. 532.

[5] Lond. xxx, 3; LB. ep. 497. *Cf.* Allen, i, p. 174.

made him feel independent.[1] He hoped for higher promotion however, and when disappointed passionately accused the perfidy of his friends, especially of Lord Mountjoy.[2] He had been introduced at court, and had dedicated to the king a translation of one of Plutarch's works[3] and to Thomas Wolsey, the rising favorite, two other translations.[4] He made nothing by them, however.

In July, 1514, he left England and spent a few days at the castle of Hammes near Calais. There, or just before his arrival, he received a letter from his old comrade Servatius, now prior of the monastery of Steyn, warning him that his protracted absence was against the rule and perhaps threatening to take measures to enforce his return to the monastery. Erasmus replied in a long letter[5] excusing himself, on the ground of his dislike of the monastic life and the delicacy of his health. He defended himself for having doffed his monastic dress, and enlarged upon the uprightness of his life and the excellent influence of his works, among which he mentioned the *Enchiridion*, the *Adages*, the *Copia*, and the soon-to-appear Jerome, New Testament, and commentary on Paul's Epistles. The *Moria* is conspicuous by its absence from this list.

In May, 1515, Erasmus returned to England to see his old friends again, but stayed only a very short time. In the summer of 1516 he traveled again to London for the purpose of obtaining assistance from his powerful patrons in a matter of importance and delicacy. Just ten years earlier he had secured a dispensation from Pope Julius to hold certain benefices notwithstanding his illegitimate birth. He had, however, need of a new dispensation and also of absolution for the performance

[1] In the epistle to Servatius, July 8, 1514 (Allen, ep. 296; Nichols, ep. 290), Erasmus says that besides the pension, Warham had given him 400 nobles (about £130) and other bishops 100 nobles.

[2] Allen, ep. 281; Nichols, ep. 274.

[3] Allen, ep. 272.

[4] Allen, epp. 284, 297.

[5] Allen, ep. 296; Nichols, ep. 290; July 8, 1514.

of certain acts which had been, in the circumstances, unlawful. Probably he had overstepped some rules about clothing; and an effort was again being made to compel him to return to Steyn. It seems likely that Servatius and his old comrades there had ferreted out fresh facts about Erasmus's birth, for a principal difference between the new dispensation and the old one is that in the former Erasmus is described as born of the union of a bachelor and a widow, while in the second the union is labeled "damned and incestuous," meaning that his father was a priest at the time. Naturally unwilling to have the affair made public, he needed the assistance of friends no less discreet than powerful.[1]

Crossing the channel in July, he went to London and was again the guest of Sir Thomas More, apparently without much welcome from his host's wife.[2] The interest of Pope Leo X in the humanist having already been aroused, it was determined to approach him on the matter through Sylvester Gigli, Bishop of Worcester, though Erasmus also wrote directly to the pontiff.[3] Together with this missive went a long one to a person in Rome, probably Gigli, which was later published in the *Opus Epistolarum* of 1529, with an address to "Lambert Grunnius, Apostolic Notary." This letter, which has been a puzzle to the biographers, is an appeal in behalf of "a supremely gifted character," called Florence, who, with his brother Antony, had been forced into the monastic life, in fact almost kidnapped, by "those Pharisees who compass sea and land to make one proselyte."[4] The story of Florence's life is given and is easily recognizable, in spite of decoration, as that of Erasmus himself. The name "Florence" was perhaps chosen in allusion to Florence Radewyn, one of the founders of the Brethren of the Common Life, after

[1] Allen, ep. 451.
[2] Allen, ep. 389.
[3] Allen, ep. 446; Nichols, ep. 434.
[4] Allen, ep. 447; Nichols, epp. 443, 444.

whom was named a "Heer-Florenshuis" at Deventer.[1] The identity of the Florence of this letter with Erasmus was known to the author's amanuensis.[2]

The name Grunnius is also fictitious, being derived from the Latin "grunnio," to grunt. It is found also in the *Praise of Folly*. In this case it seems to stand for Sylvester Gigli, to whom, we may conjecture, the original letter was sent, not as coming from Erasmus, but from his friend Ammonius.[3] When Erasmus later published this letter, in which for obvious reasons he had greatly exaggerated the amount of pressure that had been put on him as a youth and the evils of monastic life, he thought fit to match it with a reply, probably founded on an actual letter sent to Ammonius by Gigli, recounting how delighted was the Holy Father with his style and what joy he took in granting the request.[4] Ammonius, in fact, approved of the whole "fiction," and promised as much zeal in his friend's business as if it were his own.[5]

The further progress of the negotiation may be traced in the correspondence after Erasmus had returned to

[1] *Catalogus van de Incunabelen in de Atheneum-Bibliothek to Deventer, door M. E. Kronenberg*, 1917, p. xvii.

[2] Allen, iii, p. xxv.

[3] *Cf.* Nichols, ii, pp. 337–339; Allen, ii, p. 291. P. Kalkoff: "Vermittlungspolitik des Erasmus," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, i, 1903, p. 3, note. Vischer first published the other documents concerning this episode in his *Erasmiana* (1876) and Doctor Reich comments on it in his *Erasmus von Rotterdam* (1896). He proves that the letter was sent to a real person (though not bearing the name Grunnius). That Gigli was the person is proved by the fact that the letter was published by Erasmus in the first collection of epistles to appear after he had heard of Gigli's death (April 18, 1521), by the slight resemblance between the reply of Grunnius and the letter of February 9, 1517, from Gigli to Ammonius (Allen, ii, p. 321), and by the fact that Lambertus Grunnius is the metrical equivalent of Sylvester Giglius. This Latin convention in the use of fictitious names was frequently, though not always, followed by Erasmus. *Cf.* Canthelius for Cornelius. That Ammonius sponsored the letter is shown by the fact that the answer is addressed to him. *Cf.* Leo to Ammonius, January 26, 1517, Allen, ep. 517. Long after I had written this note I found the same conclusions in P. Mestwerdt: *Die Anfänge des Erasmus*, 1917, 189 ff.

[4] Allen, ii, p. 312; Nichols, ep. 444.

[5] Allen, ep. 453; Nichols, ep. 439.

the Continent. Ammonius wrote to Leo in September[1] and received an answer in October,[2] saying that the pope was favorably disposed, but could not act until he had returned to Rome, and that the Datary must receive a sop. This Ammonius promised, but the next answer was so tardy in arriving that Erasmus felt extreme anxiety, fearing that "all was lost."[3] In December Ammonius wrote that Leo was favorable and that Gigli had forwarded a draft dispensation, which he sent on to Erasmus for corrections.[4] In February, 1517, the humanist again offered more money, and on March 11 thanked his friend at court for his services.[5] A day or two later he received the news that the dispensation had arrived in London and that it would be necessary for him to come to London to confess and receive absolution. On March 15th he agreed to do this, notwithstanding his hatred of the sea.[6] Even before he went to England, however, he wrote, on April 4th, notes of thanks to Leo and Gigli.[7] When he arrived in London, he found the dispensation, dated January 26, 1517,[8] ready. In it Pope Leo granted to Ammonius the right of absolving a certain person from all penalties incurred by having put off his habit, for having said masses, or for having done other things unlawful for a bastard to do. He also allowed this person to hold certain benefices, which, apparently, were expected to be English.[9] Under this power Ammonius absolved Erasmus on April 9th.

[1] Allen, ep. 466.

[2] Allen, ep. 479; *cf.* Brewer: *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, ii, nos. 2394–95.

[3] Allen, ep. 483.

[4] Allen, ep. 498.

[5] Allen, ep. 551.

[6] Allen, ep. 552. This letter, inadvertently printed in the *Farrago*, was carefully omitted from all later editions until Allen restored it.

[7] Allen, epp. 566, 567.

[8] Allen, ep. 517.

[9] As shown by the reference to the constitutions of Otho and Ottoboni, unless this wording is merely copied from Erasmus's earlier dispensation (Allen, iii, p. xxix) without any special significance being attached to it.

With the main document Leo sent two letters, the first private, giving his reasons for granting Erasmus's request together with certain details as to the benefices to be enjoyed, the second of a more general nature, testifying to the scholar's merits, and suitable for showing to friends or for publication. Gigli also wrote a note of congratulation.[1]

This was the last time that Erasmus ever saw England. With such good friends and generous patrons in that country, it is perhaps strange that, after having spent five years in it, he did not settle there. The reasons are given by himself. He feared first the popular hostility to foreigners, which showed so ugly a face on "Evil Mayday," 1517. On that date, just after his own return from London, the populace rose against the foreign merchants, particularly his fellow countrymen the Flemings, and slaughtered some of them. Erasmus also feared that the tyranny of the king would impose on him a servitude which he could ill brook. The later acts of the despot gave but too much color to his fears.[2]

I have left to the last some account of Erasmus's relations with his two friends, Thomas More and John Colet, for his acquaintance with them extended over many years and was kept alive by frequent correspondence during long absences. There is a story that Erasmus and More first met at the Lord Mayor's table in London and conversed for some time without knowing each other's names, until the one exclaimed, "You are either More or no one," and the other replied, "You are either Erasmus or the devil."[3] But this legend bears the stamp of fiction. In all probability the meeting occurred at Bedwell or Greenwich in 1499. Thomas More was then twenty-one years old,[4] already

[1] Allen, epp. 518–520.

[2] Erasmus to More, c. July 10, 1517. Allen, ep. 597.

[3] Cresacre More: *Life of Sir Thomas More*, 1631, p. 93.

[4] On More's age, Allen, i, p. 266, and iii, p. xxiii. Apparently he was born on February 6, 1478.

practising law, but not relinquishing the study of the humanities. It was a case of love at first sight; the earliest letter,[1] written by Erasmus on his thirtieth birthday, is already full of the greatest affection. Of his friend he has left us a sketch, no less perfect in its way than are the pictures by his contemporary Holbein.[2]

In stature More is neither tall nor notably short and there is such symmetry in all his members that you want nothing. His complexion is pale rather than sallow, with just the faintest flush under the skin; his hair is dark yellow, or, if you prefer, light brown; his beard is sparse, his eyes bluish gray and spotted, which kind is said to argue a most happy nature and is considered especially amiable in England, though over here [in Brabant] we prefer black. They say no kind of eyes are less susceptible to faults. His face, agreeing with his nature, and wearing an habitual smile, plainly shows his pleasant and friendly jocularity. Frankly, his face better expresses merriment, though far removed from thoughtless or scurrilous folly, than gravity or dignity. His right shoulder is a little higher than his left, especially when he walks, which is a defect not of nature, but of custom, like most of our habits. In the rest of his body there is nothing to offend. His hands are somewhat coarse, at least compared with the rest of him. From boyhood he was always most negligent of his body, so that he did not even care for that which Ovid says men should especially care for. Now perhaps he may think it time to throw overboard whatever beauty he had as a youth; but I knew the man when he was but twenty-three, for he is now not much over forty.

His health, even rather than robust, is sufficient for his civic duties and very little subject to illness. We hope that he may yet live long, for his father attained a green old age.

I never saw anyone less exacting in the pleasures of the table. Until early manhood he preferred drinking water, as his father did. But lest this habit should embarrass his guests he would pretend to drink out of a pewter[3] cup, filled mostly, if not altogether, with water. It being the custom in England to invite a friend to drink out of the same cup of wine, he will touch the rim with his lips so as not to seem to omit the ceremony altogether, just as he performs other common civilities. He prefers beef, salt fish, and coarse bread, especially if sour, to the food usually delighted in. He is not averse to other corporal pleasures. He is fond of things made of milk, and of the eggs of hens and of other birds.

[1] Allen, ep. 114; Nichols, ep. 103. October 28, 1499.
[2] Allen, ep. 999. Erasmus to Hutten, July 23, 1519.
[3] Stanneus, an alloy of silver and lead.

His voice is neither loud nor very low, but easily heard. Though not sonorous or soft, it is well adapted to speaking, for he does not seem by nature formed for music, though he delights in it. He articulates with marvelous distinctness, neither hurriedly nor slowly.

He delights in simple dress, nor does he wear silk nor purple nor gold chains except on festive occasions when forced to. It is remarkable how negligent he is of those polite forms which are commonly esteemed. Not expecting them from others, he does not scrupulously observe them himself, though not ignorant of them either in assemblies or at meals. He thinks it womanish and unworthy of a man to waste time in these follies.

He has long been averse to courts because he always hated tyranny and loved equality. For you will hardly find any court so modest as to be without much bustle and ambition and deceit and luxury, even if not tyranny. He could only be tempted into the court of Henry VIII with much trouble, though he could wish for nothing more civil and moderate than this prince. By nature he desires freedom and leisure, though only to use that leisure well, for when business calls him he is as patient and vigilant as any.

He seems born and made for friendship, which he cultivates sincerely and tenaciously. Nor does he fear the multitude of friends so little praised by Hesiod. He is open to the claims of all. By no means peevish in his love, he is most obliging in cherishing friendship and most constant in keeping it. If by chance he becomes acquainted with anyone whose vices he cannot cure he rather withdraws from him than breaks with him. When he finds sincere friends he so delights in their society and conversation that he seems to place the chief felicity of life therein. He simply detests balls, dice, cards, and other games by which the common run of gentry while away their time. Moreover, though negligent of his own interests, no one is truer in caring for the interests of his friends. What more can I say? If anyone seeks the example of a true friend he will find it nowhere better than in More. The sweetness of his manners is so engaging and his comity so rare that there is no one so sad whom he cannot cheer and no mood so desperate that he cannot dispel it.

From a boy he so delighted in jokes that he seemed born for pleasantry, though he is never scurrilous or sarcastic. As a youth he both acted and wrote comedies.

Some anecdotes of More's practical jokes are preserved, anonymously, in Erasmus's colloquy *Exorcism or the Spectre*, printed in August, 1524. He there tells how, while a party was riding to Richmond, one Polus, a son-in-law of Faunus, pretended to see an immense,

fiery dragon in the sky and, though there was really nothing there, persuaded the whole party, one after another, to say that they actually saw the portent, the rumor of which went all over England. At another time Polus played a trick on a foolish priest named Faunus (not his father-in-law, but another man of the same name), with the aid of his (Polus's) son-in-law, the husband of his eldest daughter and a man of wondrous jocund spirit, who did not abhor such foolishness. One of the two dressed up as a cacodemon and appeared in answer to a spell recited by Faunus, and wrote to him a letter dated "The Empyrean, September 13, 1498."[1] The identification of the persons in this story has been a riddle to all biographers, most of whom would see More in Polus. But this solution seems to me impossible, both because More was too young at the date given to have a son-in-law, and because Polus is said to be fond of hunting and hawking, whereas More saw no pleasure in "the seelye and wofull beastes slaughter and murder."[2] The Greek word Polos means "colt," and the name here points rather to More's father-in-law, John Colt. More would then be the son-in-law, the youth of "wondrous jocund spirit." As he married probably in 1505, the date "1498" must be corrected. The scene of the pranks is said to be a country place near London, which would correspond well with Colt's estate at Netherhall in Essex. The interlocutors in the comedy are called "Thomas" and "Anselm." The first was probably meant to be Thomas Grey, a young Englishman of whom Erasmus was fond, and one who very well knew both More and Colt, for his ancestral property was adjacent to that of Colt.[3] The name of the other interlocutor, Anselm, would suggest William Warham, who, like the earlier Anselm, was Archbishop of Canterbury.[4]

[1] LB. i, 749 ff.
[2] *Utopia*, book ii, Bohn ed. p. 129. *Life of More*, by W. H. Hutton, p. 47.
[3] Allen, ep. 829; To More, c. April 23, 1518. *Cf.*
[4] Erasmus knew a Swiss Thomas Anselm, but he is out of the question.

Erasmus loved to play jokes on his witty friend, one of which was a letter in trochaic tetrameter, written without division of lines, as prose, and sent to see if More would detect the trick. As he failed to do so, a good laugh was raised at him. "For," says Erasmus,

he even loved jokes made at his own expense. It was his fondness for wit and fun, and especially for Lucian, that made me write the *Praise of Folly*, though to do so was like making a camel dance. But in all human affairs, light or serious, he takes pleasure. If he has to do with learned men he delights in their genius; if with fools, in their folly; for he can accommodate himself, with great tact, to all dispositions. With women in general, and even with his own wife, he does nothing but sport and joke. You might call him another Democritus, or rather that Pythagorean philosopher who wandered idly through the market place only to see the tumult of buyers and sellers. For though no one is less carried away by the judgment of the common herd, no one is less a stranger to public opinion.

His special pleasure is to study the forms, minds, and habits of animals. There is no species of bird which he does not keep at his house, as well as a quantity of rare animals—monkeys, foxes, ferrets, weasels and the like. He eagerly buys whatever is exotic or rare and has his house so arranged that there is always something to catch the eye of anyone who enters, and he renews his pleasure as often as he sees anyone else pleased.

More's love of animals is amusingly illustrated by a story told in the *Colloquies*.[1] While at his house Erasmus saw a monkey protect some rabbits from a weasel. Just as the weasel had dug under the cage in which the rabbits were kept, the monkey moved it along the ground to the wall, thus showing as much intelligence as a man. Continuing Erasmus's biography:

In his youth he was not averse from the love of maidens, but innocently, for he preferred rather to captivate than to enjoy them, so that their souls and not their bodies were joined.

From his first years he eagerly devoured the classics. As a youth he applied himself to Greek philosophy to such an extent that his father, a good and otherwise sensible man, refused to help him and almost disinherited him, thinking these studies detrimental to the practice of law. This illiberal profession is in England the

[1] LB. i, 877.

surest road to power, wherefore the greater part of the gentry apply themselves to it and insist that it cannot be mastered without several years of hard application. Although the genius of young More, born to better things, shrank from this study, yet after tasting the learning of the schools he applied himself so well to jurisprudence that litigants consult no one more readily, nor do those who have never done anything else make more at the profession. So great is the power and quickness of his mind! Moreover, he spent no little labor on the volumes of the fathers. While yet a young man he publicly lectured to a large audience on Augustine's *City of God*, nor were old priests ashamed to learn theology from a young layman, nor did they regret having done so.

At this time he applied his whole mind to religion, and with fasts, vigils and the like meditated taking orders. This course was more wise than is that of those who make so arduous a profession before they have previously made trial of themselves. The only thing that quenched his preference for this kind of life was his desire to marry. He chose, therefore, to be a faithful husband rather than an unchaste priest. So he married a young virgin of good family and one who had spent all her time in the country with her parents and with children, and was, therefore, uneducated, in order that he might form her to his own character. He had her instructed in literature and made skillful in all kinds of music, but just as he had almost made her such a person as he would have liked to pass his life with, a premature death took her away, though not until after she had borne some children, of whom three girls, Margaret, Aloys, and Cecily, and one boy, John, survive.

The girl whom he thus married was Jane Colt, the eldest daughter of John Colt, of Netherhall, near Roydon, in Essex. More began by loving her younger sister, who was the prettier, but, considering that it would be a shame to the elder to see her junior married first, he took Jane. They were married probably in 1505, and set up housekeeping in a small house in one of the narrow streets of Bucklersbury, near Cheapside, London. Erasmus was in England during the first year of their married life, and perhaps himself witnessed what he tells of it, without mentioning names, in his Colloquy *Uxor*, first published in August, 1523:[1]

[1] LB. i, 704; the identification is due to Mr. P. S. Allen, *London Times Literary Supplement*, December 26, 1918.

I know a man of good birth and education and singularly clever and tactful. He had married a young girl of seventeen, whose life had been spent without a break in her parents' home in the country, where noblemen usually like to reside, for hunting and hawking. He wished his bride quite undeveloped, that he might more easily mold her to his own tastes. He began to interest her in books and music, to accustom her to repeat the substance of sermons she heard, and to train her to other useful accomplishments. All this was quite new to the girl. She had been brought up at home in complete idleness, playing and talking to the servants. Very soon she began to be bored, and refused to comply. If her husband urged her, she would burst into tears; sometimes even throwing herself to the ground and beating her head on the floor, as though she wished to die. As this went on, the young man, concealing his vexation, suggested that they should pay a visit to her parents in the country, with which she joyfully fell in. On arrival he left her with her mother and sisters, and went off with her father to hunt. As soon as the two were alone, he told his story: how instead of the happy companion he had hoped for, he found his wife perpetually in tears and quite intractable; and he begged for assistance in curing her.

"I have given her to you," was the reply, "and she is yours. If she doesn't obey you, use your rights and beat her into a better frame of mind."

"I know," said the husband, "what my rights are; but I would rather the change were effected with your aid and authority, than resort to such extreme measures."

The father consented, and after a day or two found an opportunity to speak with his daughter alone. Setting his face to severity he said:

"You are a plain child, with no particular charm; and I used often to be afraid I should have difficulty in getting you a husband. After a great deal of trouble I found you one whom any woman might envy; a man who, if he weren't very kind, would hardly consider you worth having as a servant; and then you rebel against him."

And with this he grew so angry that he seemed about to beat her: all of course, in pretense, for he is a clever actor. The girl was frightened, and also moved by the truth of what he had said. Falling at his feet, she vowed to do better in future; and he promised continuance of his affection, if she would keep her word. Then returning to her husband, whom she found alone in his room, she fell down before him and said:

"Until now I have known neither you nor myself. Henceforward you shall find me quite different: only forget what is past."

He sealed her repentance with a kiss; and in this happy state of mind she continued till her death. Indeed, so great was the affection

that grew up between them that there was nothing, however humble, that she would not do at his wish. Some years after she used frequently to congratulate herself on having such a husband: "without him," she would say, "I should be the most miserable of women."

In another place Erasmus tells how More delighted his bride with a present of sham jewels, apparently letting her think them real. If the picture he gives of their married life is not the happiest possible, one must remember that deep love and joy came before the end. In the epitaph he wrote she was his "darling wife."

More was not long able to remain single [Erasmus continues], though advised to do so by his friends, but a few months[1] after the death of his first wife he married a widow, more to give care to his family than for his own pleasure; for indeed he used to say in joke she was neither pretty nor a maiden, but a keen and vigilant matron. With her, nevertheless, he always lived as sweetly and amicably as if she had been ever so beautiful a girl. Hardly any husband obtains as much obedience from his wife by command as he does by blandishments and jokes. . . . With like amiability he rules his whole family, in which there is no tragic strife. . . . More never sends anyone away with enmity on either side. Indeed, happiness seems fated to this household, in which no one ever lived who was not carried on to better fortune, and none who has lived here has suffered any stain on his reputation.

More's second wife was a certain Mrs. Alice Middleton, a widow with a daughter of her own. She had the reputation among his friends of being "a crook-beaked harpy."[2] Probably she had more to endure than Erasmus realized. Her gifted husband wrote that in *Utopia* husbands chastize their wives, and he also composed some epigrams on marriage that make painful reading. In one of the harshest he declares that a wife is a heavy burden, but may be useful if she dies quickly and leaves her husband all her property.[3]

Though somewhat autocratic with his children, More loved them deeply, especially his gifted daughter

[1] Just one month, according to other authorities.
[2] Henry VIII's Latin secretary, Ammonius, calls her this. Allen, ep. 451.
[3] *T. Mori Opera*, 1689, p. 241.

Margaret, and he was, in turn, adored by them. He instructed them all, girls as well as the boy, in Latin, making them so wonderfully proficient as to excite the admiration of Erasmus, to whom they all wrote letters.[1] When Sir Thomas's fortune had grown great he built himself a house in Chelsea, then not part of the great city but a little suburb, which More called "his country place." Erasmus describes it and the family in a letter of 1532.[2]

More built himself on the banks of the Thames not far from the city of London a country seat which was neither sordid nor invidiously magnificent, and yet ample; there he lives with his best friends, his wife, his son and daughter-in-law, three daughters and as many sons-in-law, with eleven grandchildren. . . . He loves his old wife as if she were a girl of fifteen. . . . You would say that his house was another Academy of Plato—but I wrong his home in comparing it with Plato's Academy, where questions of mathematics, and occasionally of morals, were discussed. More's house should rather be called the school of the Christian religion. . . . There is no quarreling nor scolding; no one is idle.

In his life of his friend, Erasmus adds:

More is most averse from filthy lucre. He has applied to his children's wants as much as he thinks they need; the remainder he freely spends. Although deriving his income from legal business, yet he always gives true and friendly counsel to his clients, with an eye more to their advantage than to his own. He persuades most to settle their disputes out of court as the cheapest way. If they refuse to do so he indicates the way of least expense, even though his clients delight in litigation. In London, where he was born, he was judge in civil cases for some years. As this office is little burdensome (for the court sits only on Thursday mornings) it is considered especially honorable. No judge ever decided more cases or more uprightly, so that he much endeared himself to his fellow citizens. . . .

Once and again More has been sent on legations, in which he has borne himself so sagely that His Majesty Henry VIII never rested until he had drawn the man into his court. Why should I not say "drawn"? For no one ever strove harder to be admitted to a court than he did to keep out of it. For truly, when the excellent king

[1] To Budé, Anderlecht, 1521. Allen, ep. 1233.

[2] Erasmus to Faber, Lond. xxvii, 8, LB. App. ep. 426. Though without date, it may be placed with much probability toward the end of 1532.

purposed to surround himself with learned, grave, and wise men, among others he came upon More, and became so intimate with him that it seemed he would never let him go. For if he were serious he found no better counselor, or if he were minded to relax his mind with pleasant stories, he found no companion more festive. . . . Yet More never became in the least proud, but in the midst of such momentous business remembered his old friends and returned now and then to his beloved literature. . . .

But I pause to mention those studies which most recommended me to More and More to me. In his youth he chiefly devoted himself to verse, but soon turned his attention to polishing his prose and practiced all kinds of composition. Why should I say how well he succeeded, especially to you who have his books in your hands? He especially delighted in declamations and preferred to take the harder side that he might thereby better exercise his talents. It was on this account that as a youth he wrote a dialogue to defend Plato's community of wives. He answered Lucian's *Tyrannicide* and wished to have me as an opponent in this argument so as to make his task all the harder. He published the *Utopia* with the purpose of pointing out what was amiss in the state, especially in his own England. He wrote the second book first to while away the time, and later added the first book *ex tempore*. For this reason there is some inequality in the style, though you can hardly find anyone else who speaks better *ex tempore*, for a felicity of language accompanies his happily constituted mind. His intellect is ready and alert, his memory good and, as it were, well ordered, so that he can promptly recall whatever the time and subject require. In debate no one is more acute, so that he can often make the most eminent theologians work while discussing their own subjects with them. John Colet, a man of sharp and exact judgment, was wont to call him the unique genius of England, although there are many brilliant Englishmen. More is a man of true piety, though most averse from superstition. . . . He chats with his friends of a future life in such a way that one may know he speaks sincerely and not without good hope. Such is More, and yet some say good Christians can only be found in monasteries!

The famous *Utopia*, here mentioned, is one of the world's great books. It was largely written at the house of Peter Gilles, of Antwerp, while More was on one of the embassies spoken of by Erasmus. The manuscript must have been nearly complete when the Dutch scholar visited his English friend at London in the summer of 1516, but it was not sent to him for

correction until September 3d.[1] He carefully polished the style and added some notes,[2] while another friend of the author got an artist to draw a map of the imaginary country.[3] The first edition, under the title *Utopia sive de optimo reipublicae statu. . . . cum notis Erasmi*, was printed at Antwerp in December, 1516,[4] being intended as an *étrenne* (*strena*) or New-Year gift for the author's friends.[5]

Erasmus rarely spoke of the *Utopia* with praise, though, in forwarding the work to Froben, he did say that he always approved all of More's writings.[6] Another reference, of a rather ambiguous nature, was to the effect that in reading it one would find himself transported to another world.[7] There may have been in it several things to shock him, as the statement that Christianity, though known, was not the prevalent religion of the ideal state. Perhaps the humanist regarded this as one of the paradoxes which, like Plato's community of wives, the author inserted as an exercise for his genius. His mild censure of More's style, which, in its mixture of irony and earnest, was not uninfluenced by the *Praise of Folly*, is, coming from so fine a critic, worthy of consideration.

But the fact is that the *Utopia* deals with a subject in which Erasmus had very little interest. Neither for the romantic framework, borrowed from Vespucci's travels, nor for the social problems at the kernel, did he have much understanding or sympathy. The New World meant little to him; the world of poverty and

[1] Allen, ep. 461.

[2] Allen, ep. 477; Nichols, ep. 464. The reading of the older editions, "nusquam adorno," must be corrected to "Nusquamam adorno," Nusquama being the Latin name for *Utopia*.

[3] Allen, ep. 487.

[4] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, Listes sommaires, iii, p. 41.

[5] Erasmus speaks of the custom of Englishmen of giving their own works as strenæ: Allen, i, p. 8; ep. 187. To the references given by him in the notes, add Roger Ascham: *The Scholemaster* (1571), *English Works of R. A.*, 1761, p. 195: "I thought to prepare some little treatise for a New-Year gift."

[6] Allen, ep. 635.

[7] Allen, ep. 530.

toil and ignorance, nothing at all. The Middle Ages had much charity for the disinherited of life, but no justice for them. In this Erasmus still belonged to the age from which some of his contemporaries were emerging. The German cities, exactly at this time, were beginning to take measures for state poor relief, soon to be discussed in a scientific treatise by the humanist's friend, Louis Vives.[1] But, save when they gave him alms, the rich and mighty of the earth regarded the laborer as a sort of animal, "the ox without horns" to be harnessed to the plow when good, and to be hunted like a wild beast on the rare occasions when despair prompted him to rebel against his lords. The intellectuals made common cause with the masters. Dürer planned an arch of triumph to commemorate the suppression of the Peasants' Revolt; Luther and Melanchthon joined Albert, Archbishop of Mainz, and Matthew Lang, Archbishop of Salzburg, to beat down in blood and blows the wretched workers who rose in blind, almost animal fury, against intolerable wrongs. The spirit of the humanists was but too faithfully expressed in the Horatian verse, "I hate the vulgar crowd and I keep them off!"

But the great heart of More went out to the people. He thought not of charity and state employment and all the other ways of dealing with paupers. He dreamed of a society where there should be no poor, where gold and jewels should be esteemed badges of shame, not of honor, and where all men should share and share alike. The sources of his inspiration were neither Plato's *Republic* nor the writings of Roman and Christian publicists, but his own experiences as lawyer, judge, and government officer. He knew too well that what we call government is but "a conspiracy of the rich seeking their own commodity under the name of the

[1] *De Subventione Pauperum*, by L. Vives, English translation *Concerning the Relief of the Poor*, by M. M. Sherwood, 1917. On the whole subject see my *Age of the Reformation*, 1920, pp. 557 ff.

common weal." He saw that the law operated unfairly toward the poor even when its ministers were incorruptible; that the cruel laws of England were such as "first made thieves and then put them to death." He denounced the inclosures of common lands by the rich lords to grow wool for the market, so that "sheep had now become devourers of men." He proposed remedies for begging, monopoly, and prostitution. He rebuked the policy of war and lying diplomacy, then regarded as the pathway to national power, and denied that states had one standard of morality and individuals another. For poverty he suggested no palliatives, but a socialistic communism as a remedy, being persuaded that if all men worked a few hours daily, there would be enough to provide for all without superfluity.[1]

Not only in politics, but in other matters, the Utopians furnished an example of the highest enlightenment. They studied literature, music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, "but all that deceitful divination by the stars they never so much as dreamt of, though many, even among Christians, to-day believe it." Miracles they regarded not as proofs of a particular religion, but merely as strange occurrences, or natural prodigies. They held that the chief felicity of man consisted in pleasure, by which they meant the reasonable exercise of all man's powers, bodily and mental.

In depicting their cult More fulfilled the dramatic exigencies of his story, and at the same time revealed his own broad-mindedness, by making it what would later have been called pure deism. Though this word did not obtain currency until the seventeenth century, the idea of a "natural" as opposed to a "revealed" religion was a very old one. Accordingly, the Utopians believed in God and in the future life, though the author remarks

[1] There is a fine, though not historically well founded, painting of More showing Henry VIII his *Utopia*, with Erasmus standing by. The artist is E. Garrett, and the original is in the home of W. H. Walker, Great Barrington, Massachusetts. It is reproduced in *The International Studio* for September, 1917.

that many Christians doubted the latter article. The priests of Nowhere were few and holy, of both sexes, and allowed to marry. Their offerings were prayer and incense. Their two religious orders devoted themselves to useful and unpleasant work. Their tolerance was broad; none was persecuted for his opinions—for they were persuaded that it was not in a man's power to believe what he list—but those who denied the existence of God, or the immortality of the soul, were debarred from public office. The benign effect of their rational polity and habits produced throughout their land a high level of virtue, far ahead of that attained in Christian countries. When Christianity was preached to them, however, they gladly welcomed what was good in it, and expelled only one missionary, whose zeal led him to declare that all who were not Christians would be damned, and to incite his followers to persecution. Him they exiled not for his faith but for sedition.

Was Sir Thomas then a pure rationalist, tolerant of all vagaries of religious faith, and holding strongly to none except to the prime articles of belief in God and immortality? The zeal with which he cultivated the Catholic means of self-discipline, as well as his defense of miracles daily taking place at shrines, and his strong persecution of heretics in later life, show clearly that he was neither a skeptic nor very tolerant. His inconsistencies have been stressed sufficiently, and even more than enough, but of them the true explanation has never yet been suggested. It is to be found largely in the distinction which More, in common with other men of his time, drew between established, recognized religions on the one hand, and heresy on the other. He seems to have been deeply influenced by Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa's tract *On the Peace of the Faith.*[1]

[1] Nicolai Cusani *De Pace Fidei.* This was printed in a collection of his *Tractatus certi,* which has conjecturally been put by the catalogue of the British Museum, in 1505. I know it in the Paris reprint of 1514, at Harvard. This explanation of More's apparent inconsistency, which seems so cogent, was suggested to me by Prof. George Lincoln Burr.

In this the great Catholic reformer of the fifteenth century tells of a man animated with excessive zeal, who persecuted the Turks beyond custom, but was finally led by a vision and by meditation to see various grounds for tolerating their religion. God had made them all, he reflected, and moreover, the vast majority of them had neither the opportunity nor the power to choose their own religion, but were forced into it by their governors and priests. He then heard, in imagination, an Arab, a Hindu, a Chaldean, and representatives of many other religions, defending themselves, and pointing out some truth in their respective faiths. This view, that there were certain licensed religions, was even reflected in the public law of Europe, which subjected heretics, but not Jews, to the Inquisition.

All this More imbibed, and all this made him ready not only to tolerate but to see good in a prescriptive faith, a venerable and long-established cult with vested interests and ancient beliefs. Very different were the heretics, who were innovators, rebels, seditious, and, into the bargain, often brawling and unreasonable and themselves persecuting. Moreover, it is unquestionable that More's liberalism was changed by advancing age and the experience of one vast, subverting revolution. Like Luther and like Burke, More then became a reactionary. He came near to recanting his earlier opinions when he hoped that neither the *Praise of Folly* nor the *Utopia* would be translated into English, lest great harm should come from them.[1] Yes, the man who pointed out that one could not believe what he list, punished with stripes and death those who would have seceded from the Church. He declared that the burning of heretics was lawful, necessary, and well done,[2] and that of all crimes he considered heresy the worst.[3] He kept up a war of pens against

[1] *Confutation of Tyndale*, 1532–33, *Workes*, 1557, p. 422.
[2] *Dialogue*, *Workes*, 1557, pp. 110, 274 ff.
[3] *Apology*, *Workes*, p. 866.

the heresiarchs, writing against Luther in a style that Erasmus thought more bitter than Luther's own.[1] He reviled Tewkesbury, who translated Luther's *Christian Liberty* and died for his faith, as "a stinking martyr,"[2] and he published long polemics against Tyndale, the translator of the Bible into English. When Tyndale defended himself by pointing out that many of his translations were suggested by Erasmus, More replied:[3]

> He asketh me why I have not contended with Erasmus, whom he calleth my darling, of all this long while, for translating this word *ecclesia* into this word *congregatio*. And then he cometh forth with his fit proper taunt that I favor him of likelihood for making of his book *Moria* in my house. . . . I have not contended with Erasmus, my darling, because I find no such malicious intent in Erasmus, my darling, as I find in Tyndale.

After Erasmus had left England for the last time he occasionally saw More on the Continent. In the year 1520 the famous Englishman was sent upon an embassy to the Hanse Towns. From July 19th to August 12th he was at Bruges, actively treating with the ambassadors of the Hansa, who noted his bland English manners.[4] Earlier in July he had been with Erasmus at the "Congress of Kings" at Calais, and had there met Germaine de Brie, a Frenchman with whom he had long been waging a war of epigrams on the subject of national honor.[5] Erasmus tried hard to reconcile the two, but in vain, at least until 1527, when Brie seems to have got over his spleen.[6]

Next to Thomas More, Erasmus's best friend in England was John Colet, to whom, as to a man of singular

[1] LB. x, 1652. The "tertius quidam" must be More; see *English Historical Review*, 1912, p. 673, note 23.

[2] On Tewkesbury, "News for Bibliophiles," *The Nation* (New York), May 29, 1913.

[3] *Confutation of Tyndale, Workes*, pp. 422, 425.

[4] *Hanserecesse*, 1477–1530, Band VII, 1905, bearbeitet von D. Schäfer, no. 332.

[5] Allen, epp. 461, 1087, 1093, 1096.

[6] Förstemann-Günther, 67.

goodness, he was introduced by Richard Charnock at Oxford in October, 1499. Of him, too, Erasmus has left a charming sketch, a biography so true, so beautiful, so vivid, that a good part of it must needs be quoted.[1]

Colet was born at London of honorable and wealthy parents. His father was twice mayor. His mother, yet living, a woman of great goodness, bore her husband eleven sons and as many daughters, of whom John was the eldest and would therefore have been the sole heir according to British law, even if the others had survived, but only one of them was alive when I first began to know him. In addition to such advantages of fortune he had a distinguished and elegant person. As a youth at home he diligently learned scholastic philosophy and obtained the reputation of a proficient in the seven liberal arts. In all of these was he happily versed, for he devoured the books of Cicero and diligently searched the works of Plato and Plotinus, nor did he leave any part of mathematics untouched. After this eager commerce with good letters he went to France and Italy. There he gave himself to the study of sacred authors, but after he had wandered through all kinds of literature, he still loved best the primitive writers, Dionysius, Origen, Cyprian, Ambrose, and Jerome. Among the ancients he was more hostile to none than to Augustine.[2]

He even read Scotus and Aquinas when he had the opportunity. He was well versed in the Canon and Civil Laws. In short there was no book on the history and institutions of the past which he did not study. The English nation has authors who have accomplished that for her tongue which Dante and Petrarch have for Italian. By studying them he polished his speech so as to be able to preach the gospel. Returning from Italy, he soon left his parents' house, preferring to live at Oxford. There he publicly and without reward lectured on Paul's Epistles. Here I first began to know the man—for some god or other sent me thither. He was about thirty years old, two or three months younger than I. In theology he neither took nor sought any degree, yet there was no doctor of theology or law nor any abbot nor other dignitary who did not attend his lectures and bring with them their books. They may have done this to

[1] Allen, ep. 1211.

[2] "Nulli inter veteres iniquior quam Augustino"; it has been proposed to translate this, "To none did he give greater attention than to Augustine," for as a matter of fact Colet quotes Augustine more than anyone else, and with approval. J. H. Lupton: *Colet on the Mosaic Account of Creation*, introduction, xlv; *Colet's Lectures on Romans*, p. xxxix; *Life of Colet*, 1887, p. 57. But I cannot find any good lexical authority for so translating "iniquior." The text is surprising, and is either corrupt or Erasmus's pen slipped and put in one too many negatives. But see Allen's note, iv, p. 515, line 273.

honor Colet's authority or to encourage his zeal, but at any rate old men were not ashamed to learn from a youth and doctors from one not a doctor. Later when the degree of doctor was offered him *honoris causa* he took it rather to comply with custom than because he desired it. . . .

Let me now make a few remarks about his nature, his paradoxical opinions, and the trials by which his natural piety was buffeted. Though endowed with a notably lofty mind which could brook no evil, yet he confessed to me that he was inclined to lust, luxury, and sleep, and not altogether safe from love of money. Against these temptations he fought with philosophy, sacred studies, watching, fasting, and prayer with such success that during his whole life he remained pure from stains of the world. As far as I could gather from his conversation, he kept the flower of his virginity till his death. He spent his wealth in pious uses and struggled against pride, even allowing himself to be admonished by a boy. He drove away concupiscence and drowsiness by perpetual abstinence from food, by sobriety, by unwearied labors and holy conversation. Whenever chance forced him either to joke with the merry or to converse with women or to participate in a rich banquet you might see traces of his natural bent. Therefore he abstained from the society of laymen and even from their banquets, to which, if he were forced, he would take some one like me, so that he might avoid their conversation by talking Latin. He would then eat a morsel of one kind of food only, with one or two drinks of beer, abstaining from wine, which, though he took little, he loved when good. Thus he kept guard on himself and abstained from all things by which he might offend. For he was not ignorant that the eyes of all were upon him. I never saw a richer nature. He delighted in men of similar mind, though preferring to apply himself to the things that prepare for a future life. He philosophized in every circumstance, even when he relaxed his mind with pleasant stories. The purity and simplicity of his nature found delight in boys and girls, for Christ summons his disciples to imitate them and compares them to angels.

His opinions differed from those commonly held, but in these points he yielded with wonderful prudence lest he should offend some one or damage his own reputation, for he was not ignorant how unjust are the judgments of men and how prone to believe evil and how much easier it is to contaminate a man's fame with slander than to restore it with praise. Yet among learned friends he freely professed what he thought. He said he considered the Scotists to whom the common herd attributed a peculiar acumen, stupid fools and anything but ingenious. For to argue about the opinions and words of others, gnawing first at this and then at that, and cutting up everything into little bits, is the work of a sterile and poor

mind. He was more harsh to Thomas Aquinas even than to Scotus. Once when I praised Aquinas; . . . after a silence he looked sharply at me to see whether I spoke in earnest or in irony, and when he saw that I spoke from my mind, replied, as though filled with a certain spirit: "Why do you praise to me a man who, had he not had so much arrogance, would never have defined all things in such a rash and supercilious way, and who, had he not had a worldly spirit, would never have contaminated the doctrine of Christ with his profane philosophy?" I admired his earnestness and began to expound to him the work of Aquinas. What need of words? He entirely disagreed with my whole estimate.

Though no one had more Christian piety, yet he cared little for monastic vows, gave little or nothing to monks and left them nothing at his death. Not that he disliked the profession, but that the men did not live up to it. He himself vowed to withdraw from the world if he could ever find a company sincerely dedicated to an evangelical life. He delegated this search to me when I went to Italy, saying that when he was in Italy he had found among the Italians some monks really prudent and pious.[1] . . . He was wont to say that he never found less vice than among married people, . . . and though he lived so chastely yet was he less hard on priests who offended in this point than on the proud, hateful, evil-speaking, slanderous, unlearned, vain, avaricious, and ambitious. . . . He said that the numerous colleges[2] in England thwarted good studies and were nothing but temptations to idleness.

The influence on Erasmus of this stimulating personality was as immediate as it was profound. The sketch just quoted, written many years afterward, rightly mentions some of the points which particularly impressed him; Colet's love of primitive texts, and dislike for the later dogmaticians, Scotus, Aquinas, and even Augustine; his criticism of the monastic life. In a letter written shortly after their meeting Erasmus emphasizes some of these same points, heaping ridicule on the "new theologians" who have reduced divinity to absurdity, by asking and discussing questions such as, "Could God have become incarnate in a devil or in

[1] Colet was probably thinking of the "Platonic Academy" of Florence, the leading light of which, in his day, was Pico de la Mirandola. On the saintly and beautiful lives of these men, *cf.* P. Monnier: *Le Quattrocento*, 1908, vol. ii, pp. 75 ff. He may possibly have also met Savonarola.

[2] In the original sense of foundations for poor students.

an ass?" At the same time he upholds the authentic theology of the Bible and the fathers. From this time on we see him turning his attention more and more to Jerome, regarded as the champion of humanistic theology, to the Bible, and to the study of Greek.[1]

Erasmus, on his side, made a favorable impression on Colet, who soon suggested that his friend should place his talents at the disposition of the university by lecturing either on divinity or on poetry and rhetoric. Erasmus replied that the former he felt above his power and the latter below his purpose.[2]

A sample of the friends' conversations is given in some letters[3] on a serious theological topic, namely Christ's agony in the garden. Erasmus maintained the conventional view that it was due to Jesus' apprehension, as a man, of the suffering he was about to go through; Colet, following a hint of Jerome, that it was due to his sorrow at the crime about to be committed by the Jews. The admirable spirit of the discussion may be seen in the words of Erasmus, "that he would rather be conquered than conquering—that is, taught than teaching."

When Erasmus returned to England in 1505 he renewed his personal intercourse with Colet, to whom he wrote, just before his arrival expressing his ardent desire to devote his life to theology.[4] He found his friend in a new office, of which the account may best be given in Erasmus's own words:[5]

> From his sacred labors at Oxford Colet was called to London by the favor of King Henry VII to be dean of St. Paul's,[6] that he might preside over the cathedral chapter of him whose writings he so much loved. This is a dignity of the first rank in England, even though others have larger emoluments. This excellent man, as though summoned to a labor rather than an honor, restored

[1] October, 1499. Allen, i, 246 ff. *Cf.* A. Humbert: *Les origines de la théologie moderne.* 1911, 184 ff.

[2] Allen, ep. 108; Nichols, ep. 108.

[3] Allen, epp. 109–111.

[4] Allen, ep. 181; Nichols, ep. 180; December, 1504.

[5] Allen, ep. 1211.

[6] Some time between June 20, 1505, and June 20, 1506. Allen, iv, p. xxii.

the relaxed discipline of the chapter and instituted the new custom of preaching every holy day in his church, besides delivering other sermons in the palace and elsewhere. In his homilies he did not take the text at random from the lesson of the day, but chose one line of argument to which he adhered for several consecutive discourses—for example, the gospel of Matthew, the creed, the Lord's prayer. He drew large audiences, among whom were many of the chief men of the city and court. He brought back to frugality the table of the dean, which under pretext of hospitality had ministered to luxury. Colet, according to his long-established custom, went without the evening meal. At his late lunch he had a few guests; the viands, though frugal, were clean and quickly served, and the conversation was such as to delight only good and learned men. After grace a boy would read aloud a chapter from the Epistles of Paul or from the Proverbs of Solomon. From these he would choose a passage, the meaning of which he would inquire both from the learned and from intelligent laymen. His words, no matter how pious and serious, were never tedious or haughty. At the end of the meal, when all had eaten enough to satisfy nature, though not appetite, he introduced another subject, so that his guests departed refreshed in mind and in body, better than when they came and not overloaded with food. If there was no one at hand able to converse (for he delighted not in everyone) the boy would read a passage of Scripture.

He sometimes took me for a comrade on an outing which he enjoyed more than anything else; a book was always our companion, and our words were only of Christ. He was so impatient of all that was low that he could not bear even a barbarism or solecism in speech. He strove for neatness in his household furniture, his table, his clothes, and his books, but not for magnificence. He wore only dark clothes, though commonly the priests and theologians there wore purple. The outer garment was of simple wool; when the cold required it he wore an inner garment of skin.

The income of his office he gave to his steward for household expenses; he himself applied his ample patrimony to pious uses. For when at his father's death he inherited a large fortune, fearing lest it might breed some evil in him if he kept it, he constructed a new school in the churchyard of St. Paul's, and dedicated it to the boy Jesus. He built a magnificent school-house in which two masters might live and he gave them a large salary that they might teach the boys gratuitously, but made the stipulation that only so many pupils should be received. He divided them into four classes. Into the first, that of catechumens, none were received who could not read and write. The second class was taught by the under master, the third by the upper master. Each class was divided from the others by a curtain which could be drawn and withdrawn at pleasure.

Above the chair of the preceptor sat the boy Jesus as though teaching. Him the whole class saluted on entering and at leaving. Above was the face of the Father saying, "Hear ye him," for Colet wrote these words at my suggestion.[1] In the rear was the chapel. There was no corner or nook in the whole school, nor separate dining and sleeping rooms. Each boy had his place. Each class had sixteen members, and the best scholars in each class were given higher seats. All applicants were not admitted, but a choice made according to nature and intelligence. That wise man saw that the main hope of the state was in good primary education. Much as the enterprise cost, he allowed no one to help him. When some one left the school one hundred pounds by will, Colet, knowing that the laity would thereby arrogate some rights or other, got permission from his bishop to apply the bequest to buying sacred garments for cathedral use. For trustees of the school he selected neither priests, nor a bishop and chapter, but some married citizens of good reputation. To some one who asked him why he did this he replied that, though nothing was certain in human affairs, less corruption was found in such men than in others.

No one disapproved the school, but some wondered why he built a magnificent house in the gardens of the Carthusian monks near the palace at Richmond. He said that he prepared this seat for his old age when he should be unequal to work or broken down with illness and forced to withdraw from the companionship of men. There he intended to study philosophy with two or three good friends, among whom he was wont to number me, but death prevented his plan.

When Colet died in September, 1519, Erasmus wrote to Fisher:[2]

The death of Colet has been as bitter to me as the death of any man within thirty years. I know that it is well with him, that he is free from the calamities of this wicked world and enjoying Christ, whom he loved so well while alive. Yet on behalf of the public I must needs deplore so rare an example of Christian piety, and so singular a preacher of Christ's doctrine, and on my own behalf the loss of so constant a friend and so incomparable a patron. All that is left to me is to discharge the offices due to the beloved dead; if my writings have power I shall not suffer his memory to die away among posterity.

[1] For this school Erasmus wrote a Sermon on the Boy Jesus, which was soon translated into English and has been edited by J. H. Lupton in 1901, as *Erasmi Concio de puero Jesu. A sermon on the child Jesus . . . in an old English version of unknown Authorship.*

[2] October 17, 1519. Allen, ep. 1030.

In pursuance of his intention of writing a biography of his friend, Erasmus asked Lupset and others to send him materials.[1] When he finally accomplished his purpose, two years later, he was not fully satisfied with the result. He wrote to Lupset:[2]

I have gathered up Colet's life in an epistle; if it seems too drab, part of the fault is yours for not giving me information colored more like the man. No one could have done this better than you. If you had only made a proper selection of facts, I should greatly have approved the manner in which you set them forth.

By dying when he did Colet escaped the storm of the Reformation. There is good reason to conjecture that he approved Luther's first steps,[3] though, had he lived, it is impossible to say what his subsequent feeling would have been.

[1] October 16, 1519. Allen, ep. 1026.

[2] August 23, 1521. Allen, ep. 1229.

[3] Erasmus sent Colet Luther's *Theses* on March 5, 1518 (Allen, ep. 786). His answer is lost. On May 30, 1519, Erasmus wrote Luther that he had powerful supporters in England. As Erasmus could hardly have meant More or Wolsey or Warham, may he not have been thinking of the Dean of St. Paul's? Colet's life has been written, and many of his works have been edited, by J. H. Lupton. (*The Life*, 1887). See also: F. Seebohm: *The Oxford Reformers, Colet, Erasmus, and More*, 1864.

CHAPTER IV

ITALY

SINCE the time of Æneas many wanderers have sought the shores of Italy. Some, like Hannibal and Constantine, have come to found new empires; some, like Pythagoras and Paul, to sow the seeds of new religions. But in modern times pilgrims have mostly sought in Italy the glories of times gone by. The shimmering Ausonian haze still flames with the afterglow of an ancient splendor. The noontide sun of Roman dominion has been followed by a sunset of unparalleled beauty and brilliance. The Eternal City was the political center of the antique world and the religious center of the mediæval world. Most of what we call history has happened within a radius of nine hundred miles from the Capitol: 90 per cent of the story of our race is told about 1 per cent of the surface of the globe.

Many were the motives which sent the contemporaries of Erasmus to Italy. Luther went as a pilgrim to the apostolic shrines: Dürer to study painting; Colet and Lefèvre d'Étaples to learn philosophy; Copernicus to gather information on the ancient astronomers; Rabelais and Hutten to taste a richer civilization than they found at home. Erasmus says that the purpose of his visit was partly to see the sacred places, partly to explore the libraries and to enjoy the society of the learned.[1] In letters of a much earlier date he professes the practical motive of taking his doctor's degree at an Italian university.[2]

The long-sought opportunity came to him at last in

[1] Allen, ep. 809, April 5, 1518.
[2] Allen, ep. 75; Nichols, ep. 71. 1498.

1506, when John Baptist Boerio, the Italian physician of Henry VII, offered him the position of tutor to his sons, John and Bernard, whom he was sending to Italy to complete their education.[1] The boys are variously described as extremely dull,[2] and as modest, docile, and industrious.[3] They had with them another tutor named Clifton, an amiable young man.

From Paris the party set out southward, the road lying through Lyons. The favorable impression made by the excellent inns of France is recorded in the *Colloquies*:[4]

> One could not be better treated at his own house than at these inns. . . . At table some woman is always present to enliven the meal with her charming humor and courtesy. The first one to meet you is the landlady, who salutes you, bids you be merry and excuse whatever you may find amiss. Then follows the daughter, an elegant person, so gay in speech and manners that she might cheer up Cato himself. They converse not as with strange guests, but as with familiar friends. . . . The provisions, too, are splendid; I can't understand how they do it at so small a price. . . . They wash your soiled linen of their own accord, and finally embrace you at parting with as much affection as if you were their own brothers.

From Lyons the party proceeded through Savoy and the Mont Cenis to Turin. As they were crossing the pass a violent quarrel arose between the pursuivant of the king of England and Clifton,[5] which was later made up over a bottle of wine. Seeing this conduct, Erasmus conceived a strong dislike for them both, and avoided their company, whiling away his time by composing a poem on old age.[6]

Turin, the capital of the Dukedom of Savoy, was the seat of a small and not very flourishing university.[7]

[1] Allen, i, p. 59; Nichols, i, p. 28. B. Rhenanus to Charles V.
[2] Nolhac: *Correspondants d'Alde Manuce*, 1888, p. 78.
[3] Allen, ep. 195; Nichols, ep. 195.
[4] LB. i, p. 715.
[5] *Catalogue of Lucubrations.* Allen, i, p. 4; Nichols, i, p. 416.
[6] *Carmen de senectutis incommodis.* LB. iv, 750 ff.
[7] On Turin, Rashdall: *Universities*, ii, pp. 56–58. There was a Renaissance church at Turin, completed 1498, but Erasmus was not interested.

There used to be an old joke in Germany that the train stopped half an hour at Erlangen for the passengers to take degrees, and evidently the standards of Turin were not much more exacting. Erasmus and possibly Clifton also took their doctorates while passing through. Erasmus was by no means proud of his *alma mater;* he worded his letters to give the impression, without absolutely saying so, that he had been graduated at the more famous University of Bologna. His diploma,[1] dated September 4, 1506, states that Baldesar de Berneci, Archbishop of Laodicea, vicegerent and vicar general of John Lewis della Rovere, Bishop of Turin,[2] and specially deputed vice chancellor of the university, having found the candidate sufficient, grants him the degrees of master and doctor in theology.

Descending the Po to Pavia, the party had the opportunity of seeing some of the finest specimens of Renaissance architecture—for example, the cathedral and one of the university buildings begun by Ludovico il Moro in 1490. Five miles north of the city stands the famous Certosa. The nave of the cathedral, begun in 1396, was completed in Gothic style in 1465: but the rest of the church is of more modern fashion. The cloisters and transepts had already been built in 1506, and the façade was erected the next year. The work of a number of different artists, it is often considered the most elaborate and richly adorned example of its style in existence.[3] Erasmus saw the wonderful monument, but was impressed by the enormous expense, rather than by the beauty of the thing, and by the pride, rather than the piety, which made the rich desire sepulture in it.[4]

[1] Printed from Erasmus's own copy in *Epistolae familiares D. Erasmi Rot. ad Bonifacium Amerbachium*, 1779, no. 1, and in Vischer: *Erasmiana*, 1876, p. 7.

[2] Doubtless a kinsman of the then reigning Pope Julius II, from whom Erasmus had just procured a dispensation. Perhaps this explains Erasmus's course in stopping at Turin, and his reception there.

[3] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *s. v.* "Pavia."

[4] *Colloquia*, LB. i, 685AB.

Proceeding to Bologna, the travelers were soon obliged to leave by the threat of a French army demonstrating against the town, and to take refuge at Florence.[1] Italy was now the bone of contention between greater powers, the Empire, France, and Spain. While Spain was firmly established in the south, Louis XII of France was marching up and down, seeking what he could devour in the north. Only the great states, the Papacy and Venice, withstood his arms. Florence, under the guidance of Machiavelli, enjoyed a somewhat precarious neutrality, a buffer state between the powers of the Golden Lilies, the Keys, and the Lions and Castles.

At Florence Erasmus was at the very heart of the Renaissance. Hardly a great name either in art or in literature that was not in some way connected with her. Her cathedral and her marvelous churches stood in 1507 much as they do now; they and her private houses were enriched then, as now, with paintings and statues of transcendent loveliness. But Erasmus never mentioned the Duomo or the Badia, Santo Spirito or Santa Maria Novella, the Campanile or the Baptistry, or the various palaces and public squares. He spoke of Dante and Petrarch as having done great things for the vernacular, and he knew that some men spent their lives expounding them.[2] He said that he had read Petrarch, Poggio, Filelfo, and Aretino; presumably he meant their Latin, not their Italian works.[3] He thought Petrarch's style barbarous.[4] He mentioned Savonarola several times, though cursorily, as one who had the gift of prophecy.[5] The works of the great artists he never described specifically, but only in the most general way, showing that he was familiar with their favorite subjects. The libraries of the humanists at Rome, he observed, were full of pagan rather than of Christian

[1] Allen, epp. 200–202; Nichols, epp. 198–200.
[2] LB. v, 954, and letter to Jonas, 1521. Allen, ep. 1211.
[3] Lond. xxvii, 38; LB. ep. 1284. To Damian a Goes, August 18, 1535.
[4] *Ciceronianus*, LB. i, 1008E.
[5] LB. v, 954, 985.

art; in such places one saw Jupiter slipping through the skylight into the lap of Danaë rather than Gabriel announcing the conception to the Virgin Mary, Ganymede stolen by the eagle rather than Christ ascending to heaven, Bacchanalia and festivals of Terminus rather than the raising of Lazarus or the baptism of Jesus by John.[1]

From Florence the party was soon enabled to return to Bologna, attractive as the seat of one of the oldest and most famous universities in Europe. Though the students were numerous, the academy had no fixed buildings of its own, the professors lecturing at their own houses. Bologna had just been at war with its overlord, the pope, and the martial pontiff, Julius II, had just conquered it. Erasmus was in time to witness his triumphal entry.[2] It occurred on November 11, 1506, the lovely Italian weather still permitting the roses to bloom. The pageant was a perfect specimen of the festive art of the Renaissance. Thirteen triumphal arches had been erected, bearing the inscription: "To Julius II, our liberator and most beneficent father." First came the cavalry, the men at arms, and the regimental bands. Then followed the papal officers, the cardinals walking immediately in front of Julius, who was carried in a chair of state, resplendently clad in a purple cope shot with gold thread and fastened with gems. He was followed by the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, generals of the orders, and papal guard. The crowd of spectators was immense.[3]

[1] *Ciceronianus*, transl. by Scott, p. 75. From such allusions it is impossible to say what pictures Erasmus had in mind. The famous "Danaës" of Titian and Correggio came later; the "Annunciation" had been treated by Giotto, Moretto, Fra Angelico, Solario (1508), and many others; the "Ganymede" of Correggio came later; the "Ascension" had been treated by Mantegna and others; Titian's "Bacchanale" was painted in 1514, though there was one by Piero di Cosimo painted c. 1485; there were many baptisms of Jesus.

[2] Allen, ep. 203; Nichols, ep. 201.

[3] Pastor: *History of the Popes* (English transl. by Antrobus, 1898) vi, 281. On November 29th the Pope had an interview with Michelangelo in Bologna. *Ibid.*, 510.

Instead of being impressed by the splendor of the spectacle, Erasmus was scandalized by seeing the Vicar of Christ celebrating bloody triumphs and surveyed the whole thing with a silent groan.[1] His deep hatred and contempt for the man who thus demoralized the Church found expression, a few years later, in a satiric dialogue in which Julius is represented as seeking in vain admission to heaven on the ground that his military exploits had aggrandized the Roman Church.[2] It is possible that Erasmus may also have witnessed the pope's triumphal entry into Rome, on Palm Sunday, March 28, 1507, a spectacle which eclipsed even the gorgeous procession at Bologna.[3]

Most of the year, however, he spent at Bologna in study. Though disappointed in not finding there anyone acquainted with Greek, he made several good friends among the scholars, the best of whom was the accomplished Paul Bombasius, at this time a professor, later secretary to Cardinal Pucci and then to Clement VII.[4]

Erasmus had hitherto worn the dress of an Augustinian canon, consisting of a long black gown, a capuce, or black mantle, and a white hood carried over the arm like a scarf.[5] It happened that at Bologna at this time the dress of the physicians who attended victims of the plague was very similar. On one occasion Erasmus was actually taken for a physician, and would have been mobbed by a crowd of citizens who feared he was bringing in contagion, had not a kind lady explained to them that he was an ecclesiastic. He therefore hastened to get permission from the pope to wear the

[1] *Apologia adv. Stunicam*, LB. ix, 360.

[2] On this dialogue, see next chapter, pp. 127 f.

[3] L. Pastor: *History of the Popes*. (English translation by Antrobus), vi, 281, 287.

[4] Allen, epp. 210, 217, 223, 251, 257; Nichols, i, pp. 426–427.

[5] These clothes might be of various colors, black, white, violet or red. *Cf. Kirchenlexicon*, 1883, ii, p. 1829. On the incident, Allen, i, pp. 59, 60, 571, ii, pp. 304 f; Nichols, i, p. 29, ii, pp. 148, 358–360.

simple dress of a priest, which he kept during his subsequent life.

The year at Bologna was, as usual, filled with literary work. Wishing to have some of his lucubrations published, Erasmus was naturally attracted by the fame of the Venetian printer, Aldo Manuzio. To be a publisher in the sixteenth century was to be a member of a learned profession engaged in the diffusion of science and culture. Among the brilliant men who devoted themselves to printing in its infancy none has attained a juster renown than Aldo. Born just as Gutenberg was making his momentous discovery (1450), Manuzio gave himself a thorough training in Greek and Latin, spending his earlier years in teaching. In 1490 he moved to Venice, and before his death, in 1515, he had printed twenty-eight *editiones principes* of Greek and Latin classics, besides many reprints and other publications. Deficient as some of these editions may seem in the light of modern scholarship, only a man of rare abilities and learning could have produced them at all. In beauty and durability of paper, type, and binding, his work has never been surpassed by all the appliances of twentieth-century mechanics. There was, therefore, no hyperbolical compliment in Erasmus's letter to Aldo, requesting that his works might be made sure of immortality by being published by him. A favorable answer brought the humanist to Venice in November, 1507, where he spent just about a year,[1] during which time he was the guest of Aldo for about eight months.[2] Here he published a new edition of *Adages*, in handsome folio.

Aldo had gathered around him a number of learned collaborators, among them the Greeks Marcus Musurus and John Lascaris, who formed a society, devoted to letters and philosophy, known as the Neacademia.

[1] Allen, epp. 207, 208. *Cf. Cambridge Modern History*, i, 564; P. de Nolhac: *Les Correspondants d' Alde Manuce*, 1888. P. de Nolhac: *Érasme en Italie*, 1888.
[2] LB. ix, 1137.

This society was extremely congenial to Erasmus, who, as a matter of course, was admitted to membership. In one of his *Adages* he relates the kindness of these friends in lending him manuscripts and assisting him with his Greek, and especially commends the noble care of Aldo to have his edition as perfect as possible.[1] One of the scholars whom he especially mentioned in this connection was Jerome Aleander, a young man of twenty-seven, whose knowledge of Hebrew and Greek had already won him distinction and who was to win a still wider renown by the part he subsequently played as papal nuncio at the Diet of Worms. At that later time Erasmus conceived a deep hatred and suspicion of him, but at Venice their relations were so warm that they shared the same room for six months, and when the Italian departed for Paris, in 1508, he was given valuable introductions by his friend.[2]

If Erasmus was satisfied with the conditions under which he worked, he was not at all contented with the Venetian manner of life. In one of his *Colloquies* he has given us a comically doleful picture of the hardships he suffered in Aldo's house. One grievance was that roots were burned as fuel, making nothing but smoke; another was that the women were kept apart from the men. In summer the house was overrun with fleas and bugs. The wine was made by adding water to dregs of ten years' standing. The bread, made of spoiled flour twice a month, became as hard as rocks. There was no breakfast; and dinner, which north of the Alps was usually served at ten in the morning, was kept waiting till one. After every excuse for delay had been exhausted a dish of tallowlike mush would be brought in. Though there were nine at table, the next course would consist of seven leaves of lettuce dressed in vinegar

[1] In the Adage, *Festina lente*, which first appeared in the edition of 1526, LB. ii, 405; Nichols, i, 437 ff, quoted *supra*, p. 42.

[2] Allen, ep. 256. P. Kalkoff: *Depeschen des Nuntius Aleander zu Worms*, 1897, p. 74. Letter of Aleander, February 8, 1521. Paquier: *L'Humanisme et la Réforme*, 1900, p. 27.

without oil. The desert was a little cheese with three pennyworth of grapes. But worse was yet to come! In the autumn the fare consisted of small portions of shellfish drawn from the sewers. When the guest complained of these he was given soup made of the rinds of cheese, followed by a bit of meat, taken, two weeks previously, from the viscera of an ancient cow. The batter with which it was covered was just enough to deceive the eye, but not the nose. And when the guest still complained his host hired a doctor to advise him to eat less! And yet this miser, to whom Erasmus gave a fictitious, but perfectly transparent name, made a thousand ducats a year![1]

Making due allowance for humor and rhetoric, it is evident that the full-blooded Dutchman was very ill satisfied with the frugal fare of the Italians. They on their side marveled at his capacity for food and drink. Many years later an enemy, who perhaps got his information from Aleander, represented Erasmus as both the servant and parasite of Aldo, and one who "though doing only the work of half a man, was thrice a Geryon for drinking, under the pretext that he needed the stimulant."[2] Exaggerated as this charge must be, it is a fact that Erasmus first felt at Venice the symptoms of the then common disease known as the stone, which he attributed to the poor food, but which is in reality aggravated, if not caused, by the too exclusive use of alcoholic beverages.[3]

At Venice, as at Florence, Erasmus was a little blind to the wonderful art of his contemporaries, Bellini, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Palma Vecchio, and Titian, none of whom he seems to have met, and whose works he never mentions.

In October or November, 1508, Erasmus left Venice

[1] The Colloquy "Sordid Wealth," LB. i, 862 ff.

[2] J. C. Scaliger: *Oratio pro Cicerone contra Erasmum*, 1531. Quoted by Nolhac: *Érasme en Italie*, p. 37. *Cf. Apologia ad XXIV libros Alberti Pii.* LB. ix, 1136 f; Nichols, i, pp. 446–448.

[3] Erasmus to Asola, March 18, 1523. Nolhac, p. 107, no. 5.

for Padua, the university town, or, as Renan calls it, "the Latin quarter" of the great maritime republic. Here he became tutor to Alexander Stuart, a natural son of James IV of Scotland, who was already appointed to the archiepiscopal see of St. Andrews.[1] The relations of the two seem to have been pleasant and intimate. Erasmus highly praises the personal appearance and accomplishments of his pupil[2] and relates how the lad amused himself by imitating his teacher's handwriting.[3] Besides Latin and Greek with the humanist, he was reading canon law with another preceptor, and devoting his leisure to history. In 1508 Alexander was joined by his younger brother, also a natural son of the king of Scotland, James Stuart, Earl of Moray, for whom, many years after, Erasmus continued to make affectionate inquiries.[4]

In December, 1508, the party went to Ferrara, famous for the poets patronized by the house of Este. The northern scholar apparently saw neither the poets nor the princes. One of the most famous scions of the ducal family was Isabella d'Este, who had married a Gonzaga, marquis of Mantua. She kept up relations with Ferrara, and also with Florence and Bologna during these years. In 1537 Cardinal Bembo noticed a protrait of Erasmus in her castle at Mantua, but this had almost certainly been sent to her from Germany in 1521.[5] Erasmus did, however, meet there a famous scholar, Celio Calcagnini[6] who weclomed him with an oration. Calcagnini was

[1] On Alexander Stuart, who fell with his father at Flodden, September 9, 1513, see J. Herkless and R. K. Hannay: *The Archbishops of St. Andrews*, i, 215 ff, and Allen, ep. 604, 2, note.

[2] LB. ii, 554B, *Adage*, "Spartam nactus es, hanc orna."

[3] To Pirckheimer, 1528, LB. iii, col. 1078B.

[4] To Hector Boece, LB. i, unnumbered page (anno 1530).

[5] On Isabella d'Este, the life in two volumes by Julia Cartwright, 1903; on this portrait, *ibid.*, ii, 378. V. Cian: *Giornale Storico della Lett. Italiana*, 1887, ix, 131. The painting, together with one of Luther, was probably sent Frederic Gonzaga by his agent at Worms. See Preserved Smith: "Some Early Pictures of Luther," *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1913, p. 144.

[6] Allen, iii, p. 26.

a friend of Copernicus, who had recently (May 31, 1503) taken his doctorate in canon law at Ferrara, and under whose influence Calcagnini wrote a notable work, of which only the title has survived: *That the sky stands still and the earth moves*. Long after their first meeting he and Erasmus renewed their friendly relations by means of letters. In his work on *Free Will* Calcagnini praised Erasmus's book on the same subject,[1] and was rewarded by compliments to himself in subsequent editions of the *Adages* and in the *Ciceronianus*, for which he wrote to thank the author.[2] At the same time he endeavored to protect the humanist from Catholic attacks that threatened him in later life.[3]

After stopping only a few days at Ferrara, the royal youths were taken by their preceptors to Siena. At Carnival time, February, 1509, they saw a curious bullfight, in which the animal was confronted not by a swordsman or by a mounted lancer, but by wooden images of various beasts, moved by men hidden inside them.[4] At Siena Erasmus met Richard Pace,[5] now a student at Padua and later a trusted diplomatic agent of Henry VIII. Another new acquaintance was James Piso, ambassador of Hungary to Julius, who found at a bookseller's a manuscript codex of Erasmus's epistles, which he bought and returned to the author. Not thinking at that time of publishing his correspondence, the humanist burned the manuscript.[6] While recuperating from an illness he wrote a *Declamation on Death*, later published.[7]

In the spring of 1509 Erasmus went to Rome.[8] The

[1] *C. Calcagnini Opera aliquot*, 1544, p. 395 f, to Bonaventura Pistophilus, Ferrara, January 5th, 1525.

[2] Calcagnini to Erasmus, September 17, 1533. *Ibid.*, p. 166.

[3] Calcagnini to Augustine Eugubinus, no date; *ibid.*, p. 149.

[4] LB. ix, 516C.

[5] Allen, ep. 210.

[6] Allen, ep. 216: LB. ep. 507.

[7] Allen, ep. 604.

[8] On the chronology of Erasmus's movements, *cf.* Allen, i, p. 452. He can be traced in Rome on April 6th and April 30th.

town, of about 40,000 inhabitants, could not compare in size or wealth with Florence (100,000) or Venice (167,000), still less with Paris. Save for the papal court, it was a city of the dead, living on memories of its great past. "Without the curia Rome would resemble a desert rather than a city," said Paul Jovius, and Erasmus expressed much the same opinion.[1] "Rome is *not*," he once exclaimed, "she has nothing but ruins and rubbish, the scars and vestiges of her former calamities."[2] These ruins occupied more ground than the inhabited region and among them wandered goats—fit symbol of desolation. Visible remains of the world's capital of a bygone age were the baths and theaters, the Colosseum and many temples. It is remarkable that while Luther's table talk has many references to the antiquities he saw in 1510, Erasmus seldom speaks of them. In fact, it is a comment on the indifference to archæological research of the greatest scholar of Northern Europe that he did not know where the site of the Capitol was, though the spot was then, as now, pointed out to the traveler.[3]

The humanist did not, however, strike Rome quite at the nadir of her glory. Half a century earlier she had been still more squalid and neglected, but the popes of the Renaissance had begun to make broader streets, handsome squares, and beautiful buildings. The improvement received a great impulse from Julius II, who brought from Florence and other cities the best artists to beautify his city. Resolved to erect a new and splendid church fit for the capital of Christendom, he employed Bramante to make the plans. This architect, with the superb self-confidence of the new age and its contempt for the mediæval style, began by destroying the ancient St. Peter's and other monuments to such

[1] On Rome in 1509, *cf.* E. Rodocanachi: *Rome au temps de Jules II et de Léon X*, 1912. H. Böhmer: *Luthers Romfahrt*, 1914, pp. 88–158.

[2] LB. i, 1016F.

[3] Allen, ep. 710; Nichols, ep. 683, November 13, 1517. *Cf. Mirabilia Urbis Romae*, translated by F. M. Nichols, 1889, pp. 16, 88.

an extent that his contemporaries dubbed him "Ruinante." In 1509 the tribune and nave of the old church were still standing, while of the new only a beginning had been made. In this year Michelangelo was working on the Sistine Chapel, and Raphael had commenced decorating the Stanza della Segnatura. The Vatican palace had been restored on a magnificent scale by Nicholas V (1477), but was further enlarged by Julius II. Bramante drew plans for two corridors from the old Vatican to the Belvedere Place; the space between them, 70 yards by 327 yards, was divided into two courts, one of which was to make an arena for bull-fights and tournaments.[1] Though the work was not completed until 1511, it is possibly here that Erasmus saw a spectacle which he describes.[2] "I was drawn to it," says he:

> by friends, for of myself I never take pleasure in these bloody games, the relics of pagan antiquity. In the interval between the killing of one bull and the bringing out of another, a marked clown leaped into the midst, with his left hand wound in a cloak and with the right brandishing a sword; he went through all the gestures of real toreadors, coming up, retreating, and pretending to fight. . . . This man's jokes pleased me more than the deeds of the others.[3]

This reminiscence serves to remind us that the Curia was one of the gayest courts in Europe. The cardinals had splendid palaces in the Borgo—the one good quarter of the city—and lived like worldly princes. Erasmus knew several of them, Domenico Grimani, who, with 18,000 ducats a year, received the humanist affably, not as a man of humble rank,[4] but as a colleague, and Raphael Riario, Cardinal of St. George,[5] one of the most

[1] L. Pastor: *History of the Popes*, English transl. ed. by Antrobus, vi, 484.
[2] LB. x, 1754.
[3] The brutal sport was finally prohibited by Pius V in 1567. See Lecky: *History of Rationalism*, i, 303.
[4] To Eugubinus, March 26, 1531. Lond. xxvi, 34; LB. iii, col. 1374 f; Nichols, i, p. 461.
[5] Allen, epp. 333, 334; Nichols, epp. 318, 319. Allen, i, p. 568.

powerful men at Rome. He also met Cardinal de' Medici, later Clement VII.[1]

Of the venality of the papal court he saw something. He knew a man who made his living by fraudulent dealing in benefices and had once cheated an applicant for an Irish bishopric, by making him pay for an appointment to a see that was not vacant.[2] Erasmus must have seen many of the relics, mostly spurious and often absurd, with which the Holy City was filled, for his works are full of allusions to such things. He witnessed the blasphemies,[3] and also the levities, indulged in by unworthy priests. On Good Friday, 1509, he heard a sermon delivered by the celebrated Latinist, Inghirami,[4] nominally on the death of Christ, but really stuffed with fulsome flattery of Julius II, served up in the purest Ciceronian rhetoric. The preacher, who neither understood nor cared for his solemn subject, delighted only to exhibit his learning by comparing the Saviour in turn to Curtius, to Cecrops, to Aristides, and to Iphigenia.

A severe moral judgment is occasionally expressed in the Dutchman's allusions to Rome.[5] The town was full of demi-mondaines, some of whom lived in splendor, like Greek Hetaeræ, the friends of great men, and the objects of poets' adulation. They often took classical names, as Imperia, Polyxena, or Penthesilea. It was perhaps with an eye to one of them, or possibly to the scandalous repute of Lucretia Borgia, that Erasmus gave the name Lucretia to the harlot of one of his *Colloquies*.[6] In this same dialogue the woman expresses

[1] Letter of Medici to Aleander, autumn, 1521, instructing Aleander to treat Erasmus considerately. Balan: *Monumenta Reformationis Lutheranæ*, 1884, no. 53; Lämmer: *Monumenta Vaticana*, 1861, pp. 1 ff.

[2] *De Lingua*, LB. iv, 711.

[3] LB. i, 732C.

[4] *Ciceronianus*, LB. i, 993 f; *cf.* Rodocanachi, p. 138. A portrait of Inghirami by Raphael is at Fenway Court, Boston, Massachusetts.

[5] LB. iv, 483. *Praise of Folly*. Nichols, ii, 6 ff.

[6] LB. i, 718 ff. On these women see E. Rodocanachi: *Courtisanes et Bouffons*, 1894.

the opinion that all men who visit Rome are made worse thereby, and the youth who is talking to her replies that he, personally, has been saved by the New Testament of Erasmus.

Although the Italian jealousy of foreigners later gave rise to the rumor that Christopher Longueil, who was copying manuscripts, was paid by Erasmus and Budé to rob Rome of her literary treasures,[1] the northern scholar speaks well of his opportunities for study. His literary work in the Holy City, however, was confined to the composition of two orations, one in favor of making war on Venice, and one against that policy, both written at the express desire of Cardinal Riario for the pope. Though the author put more heart into the plea for peace, the other won the day.[2]

Of his general impression of Rome, Erasmus wrote three years later to his friend Robert Guibé, a Breton resident in the city:

> Had I not torn myself from Rome, I could never have resolved to leave. There one enjoys sweet liberty, rich libraries, the charming friendship of writers and scholars, and the sight of antique monuments. I was honored by the society of eminent prelates, so that I cannot conceive of a greater pleasure than to return to the city.[3]

Before setting his face northward Erasmus, probably in April,[4] made a short visit to Naples, of which the only incident preserved is his inspection of the Grotto di Posilipo, on the road from Naples to Cumæ. In one place he calls it a cave of pirates, though named after the Sibyls, and describes the walls as covered with shells.[5] Elsewhere he speaks of its darkness and of the

[1] Pastor: *History of the Popes*, English transl. ed. by Kerr, viii, 228 f. This was in 1518–19.

[2] *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, Allen, i, p. 37. In 1468 Bishop Roderic Sancius of Zamora and Bartholomew Platina held a debate at Rome on a similar subject, the former speaking for war, the latter for peace. G. Butler: *Studies in Statecraft*, 1920, p. 14.

[3] Allen, ep. 253.

[4] Allen, ep. 604, 2 note.

[5] *Adagia*, LB. ii, no. 4120.

light of the entrance, shining in the distance like a star.[1] A famous Neapolitan known to him, though perhaps not until later, a man to whom he wrote of the libraries at Naples, was John Peter Caraffa, founder of the Theatine Order, and later pope as Paul IV.[2]

That Erasmus did not settle in Italy was due to the high hopes of preferment held out to him by English friends on the accession of Henry VIII to the throne on May 22, 1509. The event was announced to him by Mountjoy in words implying that the golden age of learning was about to dawn, and that the new Henry would be not only Octavus, but Octavius. The young prince, he said, only wished he were more learned, and promised to cherish all scholars, on the ground that "without them we should hardly exist at all."[3] Erasmus's hopes of profiting by the esteem of a prince whom he already knew were increased by a letter from Warham seeming to promise something definite.[4] He therefore hastened north, calling on Bombasius at Bologna sometime before September 28th,[5] and giving him an eloquent account of his expectations. He crossed the Splügen to Chur, thence to Constance and Strassburg, and so down the Rhine to Antwerp. After a short visit at Louvain[6] he proceeded to England.[7]

[1] Allen, ep. 756.
[2] Allen, epp. 377, 640; i, p. 550.
[3] Allen, ep. 215.
[4] Allen, ep. 214.
[5] Nolhac: *Les Correspondants d'Alde Manuce*, 1888, p. 84; Nichols, i, p. 465; Allen, i, p. 452.
[6] Allen, ep. 266; Nichols, ii, p. 84.
[7] Rhenanus to Charles V, Allen, i, p. 62; Nichols, i, p. 32.

CHAPTER V

THE PRAISE OF FOLLY

THE most widely read, though not the most important, work of Erasmus, the one which gave him an immediate international reputation, was *The Praise of Folly*, written just after his return from Italy, while he was waiting in More's house for the arrival of his books and was suffering from an attack of lumbago.[1]

Something of the spirit and intention of the *Folly* is revealed in the dedicatory epistle to More:

> On returning from Italy . . . I chose to amuse myself with the *Praise of Folly* (*Moria*). What Pallas, you will say, put that into your head? Well, the first thing that struck me was your surname More, which is just as near the name of Moria or Folly as you are far from the thing itself, from which, by general vote you are remote indeed. In the next place I surmised that this playful production of our genius would find special favor with you, disposed as you are to take pleasure in a jest of this kind, that is neither, unless I mistake, unlearned nor altogether inept. . . . For, as nothing is more trifling than to treat serious questions frivolously, so nothing is more amusing than to treat trifles in such a way as to show yourself anything but a trifler.

This last sentence gives the key to the *Folly*. It is a witty sermon, an earnest satire, a joke with an ethical purpose. Satire of this peculiar flavor, mockery with a moral, was characteristic of the age. How much of it there is in Luther, how much in Hutten, how much in Rabelais, how much in the *Epistles of Obscure Men!*

[1] Allen, epp. 337; 222; Nichols, epp. 317 (ii, p. 5), 212. The *Encomium Moriæ* is printed LB. iv, 381 ff; also see *Stultitiæ Laus Des. Erasmi Rot. Recognovit et adnotavit* I. B. Kan. 1898. Many editions of the English versions; see *The Praise of Folly*, written by Erasmus 1509, translated by J. Wilson, 1668, ed. by Mrs. P. S. Allen, 1913.

Erasmus probably had many of the earlier satirists in mind, though he mentions as literary sources only classical models, beginning with the *Batrachomyomachia.* He speaks particularly of Lucian, the author of dialogues on the fly, on the parasite, and on the ass, and of course Erasmus's careful study and translation of this author contributed to his own mastery of the ironic style. But there were certainly works nearer his own time which also influenced him. If he would have scorned the barbarous Goliardic songs, which contain a vast amount of mockery directed against the Church, he would have felt much less repulsion for the works of Poggio and Aretino, both of whom wrote *Facetiæ* with many a shrewd blow directed at superstition and human foibles. He knew them both, as well as Skelton, the English wit.

At Rome he must have become acquainted with one of the famous vehicles of caricature and lampoon, the statue of Pasquin, from which the word "pasquinade" is derived. In 1501 there had been dug up there a statue lacking nose, arms, and part of the legs, which was then believed to be a Hercules, but is now known to represent Menelaus carrying the body of Patroclus. This statue was set up by its discoverer, Cardinal Oliver Caraffa, in the Piazza Navona, near a shrine to which a procession was annually made on the day of St. Mark the Evangelist (April 25th). The gaiety of the Roman populace, seeing something absurd in the mutilated statue, began on these holidays to dress it up in a travesty of some antique deity or hero. Thus, in 1509, when Erasmus may well have been present, the fragment was decked out to represent Janus, in allusion to the war that had broken out with Venice. The immense publicity given to the statue gradually led to its being used as a convenient billboard for posting lampoons—for the people, deprived of power, sought revenge on their masters by heaping them with ridicule, thus tempering despotism with epigram. Finally the statue was named Pasquin after a citizen particularly

noted for his biting tongue. By the year 1509 three thousand of these epigrams were known, and a collection of them had been published.[1]

But if Erasmus borrowed something from Pasquin, he found a more direct suggestion for his literary form in the *Narrenschiff* of Sebastian Brant, first published in 1494, and translated into Latin as *Stultifera Navis* by Locher Philomusus in 1497, and again by Erasmus's friend, Josse Bade the printer, in 1505, as *Navis Stultifera*. It appeared in the French translation of Pierre Rivière in 1497 as *La Nef des Folz du Monde*. Two English versions, one by Henry Watson, and a more famous one by Alexander Barclay, were printed under the title *Ship of Fools*, both in 1509.[2]

But every reader of the *Folly* must be struck by the amount in it taken from the writer's own observation. When he speaks of what is rotten in Church or state, his reflections are usually suggested by something he himself has seen. When he satirizes the pope, it is Julius II he has in mind; when he points out the asininity of the theologians, his examples are drawn from the lucubrations of his fellow student, John Major.[3] And if he drew few facts from predecessors, preferring to paint from the life, he had even less in common with their spirit. With Pasquin satire was a dagger, with Brant a scourge; with Erasmus it was a mirror. It is true that all satire starts with the axiom that the world is full of fools; but whereas some men, like Brant and Swift, take this to heart and with *sæva indignatio* gird at folly as wickedness, and at wickedness as folly, others, like Erasmus and Rabelais, find the idea infinitely amusing. So the Folly personified by the Dutch wit was neither vice nor stupidity, but a quite charming

[1] See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, *s. v.* "Pasquinade," and E. Rodocanachi: *Rome au temps de Jules II et de Léon X*, 1912, pp. 153 ff.

[2] Herford: *Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, 1886, p. 324. Mrs. P. S. Allen, *op. cit.*, pp. iv f. Later Erasmus knew Brant personally, and wrote an epigram to him, LB. i, 1223.

[3] *Cf. supra*, p. 23.

naïveté, the natural impulse of the child or of the unsophisticated man. Though her birth is derived from Pluto, she is no grim demon, but an amiable gossip, rather beneficent than malignant.

Without her, society would tumble about our ears, and the race die out—for what calculating wise man or woman would take the risk of marrying and bringing up children! Indeed, would women or children have any attraction without her?—like Sir Thomas Brown, Erasmus evidently thinks that the act of procreation is one that no wise man would willingly perform. Without Folly, says our author, there would be more care than pleasure; without her there would be no family, for marriages would be few and divorces many. Nay, there would be neither society nor government at all. Did not the wisest legislators, Numa and Minos, recognize the necessity of fooling the people? Socrates showed his good sense in declaring that a philosopher would keep away from politics; Plato was mistaken in thinking that philosophers should be kings and kings philosophers, for history has shown no states more miserable than those ruled by such.

Even the most esteemed arts owe much to Folly, for medicine is mainly quackery and most lawyers are but pettifoggers. In fact, men would be far better off if they lived in a state of nature; just as, among animals, bees, that live according to their instincts, fare best, and horses, forced to unnatural labor, fare worst. So the wisest men are the most wretched, and fools and idiots, "unfrighted by bugbear tales of another world," are happiest. How much pleasure comes from hobbies, which are mere foolishness! One man delights in hunting, another in building, a third in gaming, but a sage despises all such frivolity.

Next, the follies of superstition are satirized, at first in words that remind the reader strongly of the *Enchiridion.* The analogy between the worship of the saints and the ancient polytheism is pointed out:

Polyphemus has become Christopher to keep his devotees safe; St. Erasmus gives them wealth; St. George is but the Christian Hercules. "But what shall I say of those who flatter themselves with the cheat of pardons and indulgences?" These fools think they can buy not only all the blessings and pleasures of this life, but heaven hereafter, and the priests encourage them in their error for the sake of filthy lucre.

Each nation, too, has its own pet foibles. England boasts the handsomest women; the Scots all claim gentle blood; the French pique themselves on good breeding and skill in polemic divinity; the Italians point to their own learning and eloquence.

Neither do the wise escape having their own peculiar follies. No race of men is more miserable than students of literature.

When anyone had found out who was the mother of Anchises, or has lighted on some old, unusual word, such as bubsequus, bovinator, manticulator, or other like obsolete, cramped terms, or can, after a great deal of poring, spell out the inscription on some battered monument, Lord! what joy, what triumph, what congratulations upon his success, as if he had conquered Africa or taken Babylon the Great!

As for the scientists or "natural philosophers,"

How sweetly they rave when they build themselves innumerable worlds, when they measure the sun, moon, stars, and spheres as though with a tape to an inch, when they explain the cause of thunder, the winds, eclipses, and other inexplicable phenomena, never hesitating, as though they were the private secretaries of creative Nature or had descended from the council of the gods to us, while in the meantime Nature magnificently laughs at them and at their conjectures.

In this disparaging estimate of natural science, though the speaker is Folly, we doubtless have the real opinion of Erasmus, who, in this, but followed Socrates and the ancient world in general. The theology of the divines is still more ridiculous:

They will explain the precise manner in which original sin is derived from our first parents; they will satisfy you in what manner, by

what degrees and in how long a time our Saviour was conceived in the Virgin's womb, and demonstrate how in the consecrated wafer the accidents can exist without the substance. Nay, these are accounted trivial, easy questions; they have greater difficulties behind, which, nevertheless, they solve with as much expedition as the former—namely, whether supernatural generation requires any instant of time? whether Christ, as a son, bears a double, specially distinct relation to God the Father and his Virgin Mother? whether it would be possible for the first person of the Trinity to hate the second? whether God, who took our nature upon him in the form of a man, could as well have become a woman, a devil, an ass, a gourd, or a stone?

So Folly enumerates the stupidities and injustices done by the monks, who insist that ignorance is the first essential, by kings and courtiers, by pope and cardinals whose lives contrast so painfully with their professions.

I was lately [she continues] at a theological discussion, for I often go to such meetings, when some one asked what authority there was in the Bible for burning heretics instead of convincing them by argument? A certain hard old man, a theologian by the very look of him, not without a great deal of disdain, answered that it was the express injunction of St. Paul, when he said: "Hæreticum hominem post unam et alteram correptionem devita."[1] When he yelled these words over and over again and some were wondering what had struck the man, he finally explained that Paul meant that the heretic must be put out of life—de vita. Some burst out laughing, but others seemed to think this interpretation perfectly theological.

If the passages just quoted represent rather the lighter side of the satire, by which it was affiliated with Pasquin and the Obscure Men, there are not wanting admonitions keyed in a higher mood. If the author was a wit, he was also a scholar; if he was a man of the world, he was also a moralist; and it is less the gauds of the outer habit of fun than the solid gold of serious precept within that make *The Praise of Folly* a criticism of life

[1] *I. e.*, "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject," Titus iii, 10. This incident was not invented by Erasmus, but was told him as a real occurrence by Colet. See the note in his New Testament to the verse cited.

with permanent literary value. If he decks his orator like Columbine to attract the crowd, he endows her with eloquence worthy of a missionary to convert them. When her cymbals have drawn an audience she forgets her part, and Folly speaks like wisdom; indeed, the most natural words to describe her animadversions are the words of Scripture: "Whom she loveth she chasteneth." Hearken to her and hear the same message as that set forth by the Christian Knight, and by St. Peter himself: "To live well is the way to die well; you will best get rid of your sins by adding to your alms hatred of vice, tears of repentance, watching, prayer, and fasting, and a better life." Away with your outward ceremonies and futile works by which, as by a kind of religious mathematics, you would cheat God and the devil; learn to do right and thus to cultivate a pure and undefiled Christianity! The world then was hungry for the words of reform and of the gospel; and it was just because the satirist weighted his shafts of ridicule that they carried far, even as one can throw a heavy stone further than the lightest feather.

Though Erasmus completed the work in the summer of 1509, and showed it in manuscript to several approving friends, he did not print it until two years later.[1] His statement that Richard Croke,[2] one of his English pupils, was responsible for the publication, is either a polite fiction or else a proof that he gave it to some one else to have printed, in order to disavow it afterward, if necessary. At any rate, Erasmus went to Paris, in the spring of 1511, to see it through the press. A glimpse of his sojourn there is given in a letter,[3] written sixteen

[1] On the several editions, *Bibliotheca Belgica, Erasmus, Moria* (*Distribution de 2 décembre*, 1908 ff); Allen, i, p. 459; Nichols, ii, 1 ff; Mrs. P. S. Allen, *op. cit.*, introduction.

[2] See J. T. Sheppard: *Richard Croke*, 1919. Croke (c. 1489–1558) taught Greek at Louvain, Cologne, Leipzig, and Cambridge, and filled several diplomatic missions. Erasmus probably knew him at King's College, Cambridge, where he was admitted as a scholar on April 4, 1506.

[3] Enthoven, ep. 49; Nichols, ii, p. 12.

years later, by Stephen Gardiner, the statesman and prelate, at this time a servant of the humanist, and one especially skilled in dressing salads. The first edition, with a dedicatory epistle to More, dated June 9th,[1] was printed, without date, by Gilles de Gourmont at Paris in 1511. It was reprinted at Strassburg in August, 1511, and October, 1512; at Antwerp in January, 1512, and by Badius at Paris, revised by the author, in July, 1512. In all, forty editions were called for during the author's lifetime.

A commentary by Gerard Lystrius was added to the Froben edition of 1515, and to most of the subsequent reprints. It was long suspected that these notes were by Erasmus himself, and it was thought the name was but a disguise. Lystrius, however, was a real person, and the secret of his operations has only just been discovered. Erasmus, indeed, began the job himself, but later turned it over to Lystrius, a youth eager for glory. Even afterward, however, Erasmus probably furnished the bulk of the material, including a dedicatory epistle purporting to come from Lystrius and highly praising the work. As one sees by the example of Sir Walter Scott, who in anonymous reviews compared the Waverley Novels to Shakespeare's plays, this questionable practice of self-laudation in disguise was indulged in by others than by the author of the *Folly*. Lystrius, having scored an easy success with his annotations on the *Folly*, wished to collaborate further in a similar edition of the *Enchiridion*, but Erasmus refused.[2]

In 1515 Hans Holbein the younger and other artists added as marginal drawings illustrations that have often been reproduced, of which more will be said in another place.[3]

A French translation was made by George Halwyn[4]

[1] Allen, ep. 222.

[2] On Lystrius, *Bibliotheca Belgica*, *Erasmus*, *Encomium Moriæ*, ed. of 1676; Allen, ii, p. 407, Erasmus to Bucer, March 2, 1532.

[3] *Infra*, p. 152 f.

[4] Allen, ep. 641. *Cf.* ep. 660.

in 1517, first printed—if this is indeed the same version and not another—at Paris in 1520. New translations were made in 1642, 1670, 1713, 1780, 1789, 1826, 1867, 1870–72, and 1877. The first of several Italian versions was published in 1539; the first of many Dutch in 1560. Sir Thomas Chaloner, poet and statesman, put the book into English in 1549; J. Wilson in 1668; and White Kennett, later Bishop of Peterborough, in 1683, while still an Oxford undergraduate. All these versions were frequently reprinted, and a new one added by James Copner in 1878. Folly began to speak German in 1520, Swedish in 1738, Danish in 1745,[1] Russian in 1840, Spanish in 1842, Modern Greek in 1864, Czech in 1864, and Polish in 1875.

The Praise of Folly won an immediate and striking success. Its publication marked the real beginning of that immense international reputation that put its author on a pinnacle in the world of letters hardly surpassed or even approached by anyone later save Voltaire. The editions were not small; within one month after the publication of a new reprint in March, 1515, seventeen hundred were sold,[2] and by 1522 more than twenty thousand copies had been issued in all.[3] Everyone knew, most praised, and some imitated the precious satire. James Wimpheling, a good type of the serious German humanist, later distinguished as an opponent of Luther, expressed enthusiastic admiration for it.[4] Ulrich von Hutten, in the second series of the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* (1517) warmly claimed Erasmus as the inspirer of his work.[5]

Rabelais owed much to him.[6] So did some English

[1] There is extant a MS. Icelandic translation of the *Moria* made in 1730. *Cf. An Icelandic Satire* (*Lof Lyginnar*) *by Porleifur Halldorsson*, ed. H. Hermannsson, 1915, introduction.

[2] Allen, ep. 328. April 17, 1515.

[3] LB. ix, 360.

[4] Allen, ep. 224.

[5] *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, ed. Stokes, 1910, p. 235, and other references, for which see index. Allen, ep. 363.

[6] Thuasne: *Études sur Rabelais*, 1906, chap. ii.

jest-books, especially the *Tales and Quicke Answeres*, printed about 1535, and reprinted, enlarged, as *Mery Tales, Wittie Questions, and Quicke Answeres*, in 1567.[1]

But against the general chorus of laughter and of praise, the voice of the theologians, or of some of them, made itself heard in more or less angry protest. The intensely conservative coterie at Louvain, in especial, murmured against him who had mocked their foibles. One Martin Dorp, having found that Folly's cap fitted him when he tried it on, complained directly to the author, and was answered by him and by Thomas More. The latter made the point that only enemies of good literature hated the *Moria*,[2] while Erasmus protested that his one object was to improve mankind, which he thought could be done without wounding them. He added that many of the sentiments expressed by Folly were the direct opposite of his own; and that he did not see why theologians should be so sensitive as a class, whereas kings, navigators, and physicians were equally held up to ridicule.[3]

Renewed and incessant attacks kept Erasmus busy defending himself throughout life. He protested that he had twitted no one by name but himself,[4]—apparently agreeing with Mrs. Gamp, "which, no names being mentioned, no offence can be took"—and he added that Leo X, having read the book through, only laughed, and said, "I am glad our Erasmus is in the *Moria*."[5]

Among the few adverse judgments expressed by humanists, that of Stephen Dolet, "the martyr of the Renaissance," is notable:

> Most persons praise the *Encomium Moriæ*, many really admire it; yet, if you examine it, the impudence of Erasmus will strike

[1] H. de Vocht: *De Invloed van Erasmus op de Engelsche Tooneelliteratuur der XVIe en XVIIe Eeuwen*, 1908.

[2] More to Dorp, Bruges, October 21, 1515, LB. App. ep. 513; *Mori Opera*, 1689, pp. 284–300.

[3] Allen, ep. 337; *cf.* epp. 304, 347.

[4] Allen, ep. 739; *cf.* LB. iv, 487A.

[5] Allen, ep. 749. *Cf.* the *Adage*, "offas ostendere," LB. ii, 461.

you rather than the real force of his language. He laughs, jokes, makes fun, irritates, inveighs, and raises a smile even at Christ himself.[1]

Some of the Protestant Reformers, like Œcolampadius, loved the *Moria*,[2] whereas others, like Luther, were repelled by it. Luther quotes from it, though not by name and without expressing any opinion of it, in his lectures on the Psalms, late in the year 1516.[3] One might think that he would have relished the attack on the old Church, as a help to his own cause, but he was soon heard to cry out against such an ally. In his own copy (Basle, 1532) he wrote:[4]

When Erasmus wrote his *Folly*, he begot a daughter like himself. He turns, twists, and bites like an awl, but he, as a fool, has written true folly.

Another satire, of far less importance, which, though published anonymously, brought some trouble on its author, was a tiny dialogue entitled *Julius excluded from Heaven*,[5] which represented the pope as vainly seeking admission to paradise. Apparently written not long after the death of Julius II (February 21, 1513), it was first published in 1517, and was at once attributed to Erasmus by Scheurl, by Pirckheimer, and by Luther, as well as by other friends who were in the secret of the authorship. He endeavored, by elaborate equivocation, amounting almost but not quite to denial, to mislead prelates and others inclined to take offence at the bold mockery of the head of the Church. Luther judged it "so jocund, so learned, and so ingenious—that is, so entirely Erasmian—that it makes the reader laugh

[1] R. C. Christie: *Étienne Dolet*, 1899, p. 191.
[2] Allen, ep. 224.
[3] *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, iv, 442, *cf. Nachträge*, p. viii.
[4] *Luther's Briefwechsel*, ed. Enders, ix, 254.
[5] Reprinted in Böcking: *Hutteni Opera*, 1859–66, iv, 421, and in Jortin's *Life of Erasmus*, 1758–60, ii, 600–622. Translated in Froude's *Life and Letters of Erasmus*. Pastor, *History of the Popes*, English, vi, 438 n., wrongly attributes it to Faustus Andrelinus. Jortin, *loc. cit.*, Nichols, ii, p. 446, and Allen, ep. 502, introduction, prove it to be by Erasmus.

at the vices of the Church, over which every true Christian ought rather to groan."[1] Later, however, his opinion of it rose so high that he would have liked to translate it into German, but feared that he could not do justice to the style.[2]

[1] L. C. ep. 42, to Spalatin, November, 1517. Enders, i, 121.

[2] L. C. ep. 130, February 20, 1519. Enders, i, 433. *Cf. Luthers Tischreden*, Weimar, iv, no. 4902, May, 1540. On copies sold in Oxford in 1520 by John Dorne see *Publications of the Oxford Historical Society*, v, 1885, pp. 94, 113, 117.

CHAPTER VI

THE RHINE

ERASMUS, born in the delta of the Rhine, spent many years on the banks of that noble river, at the Swiss town of Basle. Well did he know the course of the famous stream from Chur, near its source, to the North Sea; with the great cities strung like beads on its blue filament he was well acquainted, passing through them often in his frequent journeyings. For at that time the Rhine was a principal artery of European commerce and the chief avenue from the northwestern coast to the Alpine lands and to Italy.

His ascent of the Rhine in the summer of 1514 was like a triumphal progress. The fame of the *Folly*, re-enforced by that of the *Adages* and of the *Enchiridion*, already gave him the natural leadership of the large society of humanists then pulsing into lusty life in the universities and wealthy towns of Germany. The Renaissance, like spring, came late to the northern latitudes, but when it did come it brought verdant life. With the earnestness characteristic of their race, young Germans seized on the classic literature, and put it to the sack, as though it were an empire to be conquered by their famous soldiery. Perhaps they felt like the American who remarked that though Chicago hadn't had much time for culture yet, when she did get around to it she would make it hum. Fraternities of "poets," as they called themselves, were formed in every town of any pretensions, as well as at the academies of learning. These men worshiped literature, hated crabbed scholasticism, and highly resolved to bring in a new reign of culture and of light. The man

who had mastered the classics, who had routed the Philistines, and who had shown the path of progress, was their idol. They crowned him with verses as with diadems, they burned the incense of their homage before him. And now the great man, "amiable and bearing the horn of plenty,"[1] was to come among them.

Leaving England in July, 1514, after a few visits to friends in the Netherlands,[2] Erasmus proceeded to Mainz,[3] the seat of a prince-archbishop, who had also the powers and titles of Elector, Imperial Arch-marshal, and Primate of Germany. The occupant of the see was Albert of Brandenburg, an enterprising and unscrupulous Hohenzollern, determined to play a brilliant part in politics and as a patron of the liberal arts. Even before his day his predecessors Berthold von Henneberg (1484–1504) and Uriel von Gemmingen (1508–14) had attracted to the University of Mainz leading humanists, thus making that academy, together with Erfurt, also under the jurisdiction of Mainz, the chief center of learning in Germany. Famous, as Erasmus knew, because of the invention of printing,[4] Mainz had now become one of the foci of the popular intellectual revolution that preceded the Reformation. Whether the humanist met the young archbishop, with whom he afterward corresponded, is not known; but he met one of his courtiers, Ulrich von Hutten.[5]

Hutten,[6] one of the romantic figures of the time, a

[1] Spalatin to Lang, March 3, 1515, L. C. ep. 9.

[2] Allen, epp. 299, 301, ii, p. 5; Nichols, ep. 291.

[3] F. Herrmann: *Die evangelische Bewegung zu Mainz im Reformationszeitalter*, 1907; and various encyclopædias, under Mainz and Albert of Brandenburg. Also Dietrich und Bader: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Universitäten Mainz und Giessen.*

[4] Allen, ep. 919.

[5] Crotus Rubeanus is mistaken in saying, in a letter to Mutian, June 11, 1515 or 1516, that Erasmus met Hermann Busch and Reuchlin at this time. C. Krause: *Der Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus*, 1885, no. 533, and K. Gillert: *Der Briefwechsel des Conradus Mutianus*, 1890, p. 171. *Cf.* Allen, ep. 830, introduction, ep. 967, 72 note, ep. 300, 12 note.

[6] Life by D. F. Strauss, 4th ed., 1895; also English translation. *Cf.* L. C., ep. 189; Allen, ep. 365. P. Kalkoff: *Ulrich von Hutten und die Reformation*, 1920

passionate, wayward nature, not without nobility of purpose, was something between an Ishmael and a Knight of Christ, a Thraso turned into a Crusader. From his youth he had dedicated himself to the causes of liberty and of patriotism, always pointing his sword and his mightier pen at the breast of some tyrant; first at that of Duke Ulrich of Württemberg, who murdered Hutten's cousin John for the sake of John's wife; then at the Dominican inquisitors; finally at the pope of Rome, as the enemy of the Lutheran gospel. From his picture, in his knight's armor and poet's crown of laurel, his lean, dissipated face looks out boldly, impudently, but not without fire. Quick of temper as of wit, he was always ready for a quarrel; nor was he backward in boasting of his victories. When attacked by five French ruffians, he assured his friends, he had slain one and put the rest to flight.[1] Now, at the age of twenty-six, before he had won the laureate's crown of Germany, he was captivated by the scholar-wit and longed to play the Alcibiades to the older man's Socrates.[2] Erasmus, too, was so favorably impressed that he inserted into his New Testament of 1516 a note of praise for his young friend.[3]

The second meeting of the two occurred at Frankfort on the Main, in the spring of 1515, while Erasmus was traveling back from Basle to England. He had visited the ancient city, not to see its Roman relics and imperial insignia, but to attend the famous book fair held here in March or April of each year. In 1515 it had lasted from March 11th to March 30th.[4] At Frankfort he

[1] Allen, ep. 611. July 30, 1517.

[2] Allen, ep. 365; Nichols, ep. 351; October 24, 1515. *Cf.* also the account of Erasmus, doubtless from Hutten's pen, in the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, ed. Stokes, i, 42.

[3] LB. vi, 555.

[4] J. W. Thompson: *The Frankfort Book Fair*, 1911, p. 46. A. Dietz: *Zur Geschichte der Frankfurter Büchermesse*, 1921. A. Dietz: *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, 1910. The fair was opened on the Sunday Oculi—four weeks before Easter—and closed on the Friday before Palm Sunday. In 1515 Palm Sunday fell on April 1st.

also met John Reuchlin,[1] the foremost Hebrew scholar of the day, now the accused in one of the most notorious heresy trials in history. His refusal to participate in a plan of a converted Jew, named Pfefferkorn, to destroy all Hebrew books except the Old Testament, had exposed him in 1509 to a charge of heresy at the hands of the Dominicans of Cologne. The leader of these "hounds of the Lord" (to quote the famous pun on the name Dominicani and Domini canes) was a certain Hochstraten, the chief inquisitor for Germany, aided by a peculiar humanist, Ortwin Gratius by name. Reuchlin's memorial, called the *Oculare Speculum*, or Eyeglass, protesting to the Emperor Maximilian against the destruction of the Hebrew literature was fiercely attacked and publicly burned. An appeal to Rome dragged out the process for many a long year. The *cause célèbre* excited the passionate partisanship of all Europe; the humanists, all save Ortwin, sided with Reuchlin; the monks almost to a man were against him. Erasmus naturally sided with the persecuted scholar, with whom he had been already in correspondence in 1514.[2]

When he first met Hutten at Mainz in that year the latter was hotly engaged in the cause, and had written *The Triumph of Reuchlin*, which Erasmus advised him to suppress as imprudent and premature.[3] At this time Erasmus had obtained Reuchlin's *Memorial*, together with its condemnation by Hochstraten, and had thoroughly convinced himself of the Hebrew scholar's orthodoxy, though he mildly censured his invective. He

[1] Reuchlin's letters have been edited, and his life written, by Geiger. See also *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie;* Stokes, *op. cit.*, introduction, Allen, i, p. 555. For Reuchlin's meeting, the only one with Erasmus, see Allen, ep. 967, 72 note. LB. x, 1662C, 1668E. Nichols, ii, 181; Allen, ii, p. 67; *Briefwechsel des Mutianus Rufus*, no. 533; K. Gillert: *Briefwechsel des Conradus Mutianus*, p. 171. The letter here dated June 11, 1515, should be 1516, and is mistaken in saying "Mainz" instead of "Frankfort."

[2] Allen, ep. 290; Nichols, ep. 285; *cf.* Allen, ep. 300.

[3] It was, however, printed in 1518; *Hutteni Opera*, iii, 413 ff; *cf.* i, 26. LB. x, 1668DE.

accordingly had written to Reuchlin from Basle, assuring him of his own esteem, and telling him of the sympathy of Fisher and of Colet.[1] On March 1st of the following year he forwarded some questions[2] from Fisher to Reuchlin. A little later he took occasion, in writing to Cardinals Riario and Grimani,[3] to plead the cause of his eminent friend, whose trial was then pending at Rome. To the former correspondent he said:

I do most earnestly beseech and adjure you, for the sake of sound learning which Your Eminence is always wont to cherish, that that distinguished man, Doctor John Reuchlin, may enjoy your justice and good will in the business in which he is now concerned. . . . All Germany is indebted to him, for he first aroused in that country a love of Greek and Hebrew literature; he is a man skilled in several languages and learned in various sciences, long known to the Christian world by the books he has published, and especially favored of the Emperor Maximilian, one of whose councillors he is, while among his fellow citizens he holds the honorable position of triumvir[4] [of the Swabian League], and a reputation which has never been soiled. . . . Therefore to all good men who know him by his writings, not only in Germany but also in France and England, it appears most unworthy that so distinguished a man should be harassed by such hateful litigation, and that for a thing that in my judgment is more trifling than an ass's shadow, as the jesting proverb says.

This letter, together with the one to Grimani, was published by Froben in August, 1515. Though they apparently had little effect in Rome, for Riario does not mention Reuchlin in his answer, they doubtless had some influence in Germany.

Erasmus continued in his letters to defend Reuchlin and pay his respects to Pfefferkorn in such words as these:[5]

I hear that that pestilent Corn, sowed by some clever Satan, has published a book in which he rages against all the learned with impunity. He is the tool of those illustrious pillars of religion,

[1] Allen, ep. 300; Nichols, ep. 294.
[2] Allen, ep. 324; Nichols, ep. 315.
[3] Allen, epp. 333, 334; Nichols, epp. 318, 319.
[4] So Erasmus. Reuchlin held the position of triumvir in the South German confederacy known as the Swabian League for the years 1502–13.
[5] To Banisius, November 3, 1517; Allen, ep. 700; Nichols, ep. 671.

misused by them to break up the peace of Christendom. I wish he were a Jew all over—and that his tongue and both hands were circumcised as well as his other parts! As things now are this angel of Satan, taking the form of an angel of light, fights under our own banners against us, and will soon betray us, as Zopyrus [by pretending to be mutilated] betrayed Babylon to Darius.

Reuchlin received so many testimonials from eminent supporters that he published them under the title of *Letters of Famous Men.* This suggested to one of his most brilliant supporters, Crotus Rubeanus, the idea of a satire on his foe Ortwin, in the form of a series of burlesque *Letters of Obscure Men.* These epistles purported to be written to Ortwin by wretched monks who blatantly exposed their atrocious Latin, superstition, bigotry, ignorance, and immorality. The first series of letters was published in the autumn of 1515 by Wolfgang Anxt of Hagenau, and at once sent by him to Erasmus, with an excuse for the boldness of the Obscure Men in addressing so great a personage as him, with whose *Folly* they feel an affinity.[1] In 1516 Hutten published a second edition of the work, with a few letters added; and in 1517 he wrote a second series of the Letters, distinguished from those of Crotus by their greater virulence.

The *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* had much popular success in raising a laugh against the monks throughout Europe. Erasmus, however, notwithstanding his liberal sympathies, highly disapproved of the satire. On August 16, 1517, he wrote to Cæsarius:[2]

The Letters of Obscure Men greatly displeased me, even from the beginning. The joke might amuse if it had not become personal. I like satire provided it be without insult to anyone. But it was right annoying when in the second edition my name was mixed up in it: as if it were not enough to play the fool without exciting

[1] *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, ed. with translation by F. G. Stokes, 1909. On authorship and date see his introduction, and Steiff: *Buchdruck zu Tübingen*, pp. 217 f; Bauch and Steiff in *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, xv, 1898, pp. 490 ff; Allen, ep. 363, and ii, pp. xix–xx.

[2] Allen, ep. 622; Nichols, ii, p. 610.

odium against me and thus in a great measure destroying the fruit obtained by so much laborious study. And as if that had been deemed insufficient, a second book, like the first, has made its appearance, in which there is frequent mention of persons to whom I am quite sure mockery of this kind is anything but agreeable.

To the same correspondent he wrote on April 5th of the following year that he wished the book had never been published or that, if published, it had appeared under a different title. He sarcastically added that the satire was so perfect that it was read at Louvain as if it were a serious defence of the monks. One of the professors, who hated Reuchlin and loved Hochstraten, even bought twenty copies as presents to his friends![1] Again, he says that he disapproves of the slanders contained in the book, not of the jokes.[2]

With Reuchlin he continued to keep up a friendly correspondence and he also wrote, with unwonted boldness, to both Hochstraten and Ortwin, urging moderation. He observed that there is no need of exciting hatred against the Jews, "for if to hate Jews be Christian, we are Christian enough already." He protested that he himself was not to be confounded with Reuchlin, for he never cared for the Cabbala, but that he did not think it necessary to "mix heaven and earth to make such a melodrama."[3] Gratius he begged to devote himself rather to study than to quarrels worthy neither of a scholar nor of a Christian.

When the Lutheran affair began to make Erasmus more cautious he published, in an edition of the *Colloquies*, a signed *Protest against seditious Calumnies*,[4] calling to account the indiscreet persons who had, without his consent, and, as he believed, without the consent of Reuchlin, published their private correspondence.

[1] To Cæsarius, April 5, 1518; Allen, ep. 808.

[2] To Neuenaar, August 25, 1517; Allen, ep. 636.

[3] "Tantas excitare tragœdias," a favorite phrase of Erasmus. Letter to Hochstraten, August 11, 1519, Allen, ep. 1006. Letter to Gratius, Allen, ep. 1022. The text was much mutilated, but has been restored by Allen.

[4] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana, Colloquia*, i, pp. 59, 65.

"I am not a Reuchlinist," he declared, "nor yet a partisan of any human faction. I am a Christian and recognize Christians and not Erasmians or Reuchlinists." Nevertheless, his admiration for the great scholar induced him, when the latter died, in June, 1522, to write an *Apotheosis of Reuchlin*, for insertion in the later editions of the *Colloquies*.[1]

From this long digression let us return to accompany the great man on his triumphal progress through Germany in the summer of 1514. From Mainz, probably accompanied by Hutten, he ascended the Rhine to Strassburg, an important German Imperial Free Town, with which Erasmus was immensely pleased.

> There [he wrote] I have seen old men not morose, nobles without arrogance, magistrates without pride, citizens ornamented with the virtues of famous heroes, a vast populace without tumults. In short, I saw a monarchy without tyranny, an aristocracy free from faction, a democracy without turbulence, wealth without wantonness, prosperity without insolence.[2]

He was made particularly happy by the ovation given him by the circle of humanists. Their leader, perhaps, was Jacob Wimpfeling,[3] a Catholic Reformer who had written on theology, but had also cultivated letters. He wrote an essay glorifying Germany, and later took part against Luther. Sebastian Brant, whose *Ship of Fools* Erasmus knew, was now the secretary of the Strassburg government, and Erasmus met him[4] either at this time or at Antwerp in 1520. Another statesman and humanist, noted for the school he founded, was John Sturm.

One of the glories of Strassburg, the cathedral, with a spire 465 feet high, was already ancient in the sixteenth

[1] *De incomparabili heroe Johanne Reuchlino in divorum numerum relato.* LB. i, 689 ff.

[2] Allen, ep. 305; Nichols, ep. 298. To Wimpfeling, September 21, 1514.

[3] Allen, epp. 302, 305; Nichols, epp. 295, 298. C. Schmidt: *Histoire littéraire d'Alsace*, 2 vols. 1879. *Revue Historique*, 112, p. 247.

[4] *Supra*, p. 119; Allen, ep. 1132, introduction; P. Kalkoff in *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, xxviii, 1905, pp. 474–485.

century. On one occasion, whether now or at a later visit is not known, Erasmus was taken over it by some of its canons, perhaps Gerbel and Gebweiler. The canons were boasting that no one could be admitted to their chapter unless he had at least fourteen noble ancestors on his father's side, and as many on his mother's. They were somewhat abashed when, with characteristic wit and demure sweetness, their guest remarked: "Then Christ himself could not have been received into this chapter unless he got a dispensation from this rule." They took the lesson to heart, or at least they remembered the saying many years afterward.[1]

The next stop, in this progress of the summer of 1514, was made at Schlettstadt, a small town of only 4,000 to 5,000 inhabitants, but boasting a few humanists of note.[2] The greatest of them was Beatus Rhenanus[3] (as Beat Bild of Rheinau preferred to be called) now living at Basle, but occasionally to be found at his native place or at Strassburg. His historical work was the most noteworthy on the critical side of any produced by his German generation. In the sifting of sources he was as cool, as fine, and as successful as his friend Erasmus, from whom he learned much. He was a historian first, a patriot, or a partisan, secondarily, if at all. Another humanist of Schlettstadt, was the schoolmaster John Sapidus,[4] who accompanied the illustrious visitor to Basle.

[1] It was told to John Christopher, Freiherr von Zimmern, who was consecrated as canon on September 29, 1531. *Das Zimmersche Chronik*, hg. von K. A. Barack, 2d ed., 1881, iii, 129.

[2] J. Gény: *Die Reichstadt Schlettstadt und ihr Anteil an den social-politischen und religiösen Bewegungen der Jahre 1490–1536. (Erläuterungen und Ergänzungen zu Janssens Geschichte des Deutschen Volkes*, Band I), 1900.

[3] *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, hg. von A. Horawitz und K. Hartfelder, 1886, with life by his friend Sturm. *Cf.* also *Historische Jahrbücher*, xxviii, 714–716; *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, Bände 29, 31 (1914, 1916). On his historical work, E. Fueter: *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie*, 1911, 190 ff. G. Knod: *Aus der Bibliothek des Beatus Rhenanus*, 1889.

[4] LB. i, 1223; Nichols, ii, p. 155.

In Basle[1] Erasmus spent many years of his life, most of the time from the middle of 1514 to the middle of 1516, again from 1521 to 1529, and the year before his death (1535–36). Though a small town, it was prosperous, cultured, and pretty. After a good deal of negotiation it had thrown off its obligations to the Hapsburgs and had been received into the Swiss Confederacy (1501–03). It was described by Beatus Rhenanus, with a pun on the name, as "a royal residence, the queen of cities," with pleasant, even magnificent houses, clean streets, gay gardens, delightful views, polite citizens, and a mild climate. The university,[2] founded in 1460, had a good name, even before Œcolampadius and Grynaeus raised it to European celebrity. Memories of the Council of Basle (1431–48) animated the place with a sense of freedom and reform. Famous writers like Brant and artists like Dürer and Holbein had spent, or were spending, parts of their lives here. Most of all, Basle was famous for its printers.[3] John Amerbach had set up his press in 1475, and in 1513 had entered into a partnership with the still more famous John Froben. The government of the town was republican; the gilds had just thrown off the old aristocracy of nobles, and further asserted their power in 1516.[4] A still more democratic revolution was to take place with the subsequent introduction of the Reformation.

During much of his life at Basle, Erasmus dwelt in

[1] On Basle: *Basel*, von Martin Wackernagel, 1912. Rudolph Wackernagel: *Geschichte der Stadt Basel*, Band II, Teil II, 1916. *Die Stadt Basel und Ihre Umgebung*, hg. von Verkehrsverein der Stadt Basel, 1898. R. Thommen: *Urkundenbuch der Stadt Basel*, Bände 9, 10, 1905, 1908. P. S. Allen: *Age of Erasmus*, 1914, p. 146. E. Doumergue: *Vie de Calvin*, i, 1899, pp. 471 ff. A. Heusler: *Geschichte der Stadt Basel*,[3] 1918. A series of pictures of Basel in 1618 by Merian in the Cornell library.

[2] W. Fischer: *Geschichte der Universität Basel, 1460–1529*. 1860.

[3] Stockmeyer und Reber: *Beiträge zur Basler Buchdruckergeschichte*. 1870.

[4] On March 8, 1515, while Erasmus was there, the old patricians agreed that all offices should be open to members of the gilds; on St. John's Day (December 27), 1516, the gilds elected their first burgomaster, James Meier. When the bishop tried to interfere the Town Council, on March 12, 1521, declared the city free from the bishop's jurisdiction. Heusler, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

a small house called Zur Luft—names then taking the place of numbers—in the Little-Tree Alley (Bäumlein Gasse). Hating stoves and close rooms as he did, Erasmus perhaps selected it for the good air promised by its name, though in fact it does not look very airy. Some of the old utensils used by Erasmus are still preserved; among them a knife and fork with handles chased with designs of Adam and Eve, possibly made by Holbein.

As the publishing house of Froben was the magnet attracting Erasmus to Basle, it is natural that he should soon be introduced to the famous printer in a way pleasantly described by himself:[1]

> I delivered to Froben a letter from Erasmus, adding that he was my intimate friend, and had intrusted me with the business of publishing his lucubrations, so that whatever I did would stand good as done by Erasmus himself. At last I added that I was so like him that whoever saw me saw Erasmus. He then broke into a laugh as he detected the hoax.

A warm friendship sprung up between the two. Erasmus thus spoke of his printer, just after his death in 1527:[2]

> Who would not love such a nature? He was to his friends the one best friend, so simple and sincere that even if he had wished to pretend or conceal anything he could not have done it, so repugnant was it to his nature. He was so ready and eager to help everyone that he was glad to be of service even to the unworthy, and thus became a fit prey to thieves and swindlers. He was as pleased to get back money stolen or lent to a fraudulent debtor as others are with an unexpected fortune. His incorruptible honor deserved the saying: "He was a man you could trust to play fair in the dark." Incapable of fraud himself, he could never see it in others, though he was not seldom deceived. He could no more imagine the disease of envy than a man born blind can understand colors. He pardoned even serious offenses before he asked who had committed them. He could never remember an injury nor forget the smallest service. And here, in my judgment, his goodness was excessive, for a wise father of a family. I used to advise him sometimes that, while con-

[1] Allen, ep. 305; Nichols, ep. 298. On Froben, Allen, ii, 250.
[2] Lond. xxiii, 9. End of October, 1527. LB. iii, col. 1053.

tinuing to be true to his sincere friends, he should expend only kind words on imposters who both cheated and laughed at him. He smiled gently, but I told my tale to a deaf man. The frankness of his nature was too much for all warnings. What snares did he not spread for me, what excuses did he not hunt up to force a gift on me? I never saw him happier than when, by artifice or importunity, he succeeded in getting me to take something. Against his artifices I needed my utmost caution, and all my skill in rhetoric, to devise some plausible reason refusing what he offered, without hurting him, for I could not bear to see him sad. If by chance my servants had bought cloth for my clothes, he would ferret out and pay the bill before I suspected it, and no entreaty of mine could make him take the money again. So, if I wanted to save him from loss, I had need of singular arts, and there was between us a contest quite different from the common usage of the vulgar, where one tries to get as much and the other to give as little as possible. I could never entirely avoid his gifts, but that I made a most moderate use of his kindness all his family will, I think, bear me witness. Whatever he did for me he did for love of learning. Since he seemed born to honor, to promote and to embellish learning, and spared no labor or care, thinking it reward enough if a good author were put into the hands of the public in worthy form, how could I take advantage of a man like this?

Erasmus's life at Basle was very pleasant. To one friend he wrote that he could not express how much he liked both the climate and the hearty, friendly people.[1] At times his work seemed excessive, so that he spoke of Basle as a prison in which he had done six years' work in eight months.[2] To his dear Bruno Amerbach he wrote: "What is our mill doing? How goes it in the cave of Tryphon? Have you been lucky enough to escape and vindicate your liberty?"[3]

An extremely agreeable picture of his relations with the younger men around him is given in a letter from Henry Glarean, who said to him: "Besides innumerable other benefits you conferred on me the chief is this, that you taught me to know Christ, and not only to know, but to imitate, to reverence, and to love him."[4]

[1] Allen, ep. 412; Nichols, ep. 399.
[2] Allen, ep. 410; Nichols, ep. 397.
[3] Allen, ep. 439. July 13, 1516.
[4] Allen, ep. 463. September 5, 1516.

This is acceptable evidence of the moral influence exercised by Erasmus and of the rectitude of his own life. He himself, however, did not maintain the lofty, transcendental position that virtue is its own reward, but thought that, though virtue was the chief good, a man could not be really happy without other goods as well.[1]

Erasmus never lived eight consecutive years in any one town, and even while he kept his head-quarters at Basle he continued to make frequent journeys back and forth to the Netherlands. Traveling was not so easy or rapid then as it is now. Boats and horses were, of course, the only means of conveyance. Sometimes the Rhine was so swollen with floods that the trip was more like swimming than riding;[2] at other times the roads were so muddy that the horses were "almost shipwrecked."[3] There were other dangers in travel than those supplied by the weather. Of these the most often mentioned were the plagues and the robbers.[4] Thus on April 23, 1518, he wrote Colet:[5]

> I am girt up for a journey perilous on account of the disbanded scoundrels and marauders who have gathered by thousands to fall upon others. This is the cruel clemency of princes, to spare impious parricides and sacrilegious criminals, but not their own subjects.

It was on these frequent journeys that Erasmus received the unpleasant impression of German inns, humorously recorded in the *Colloquies*.[6] We know from other sources that much of what he says about these was not exaggerated. In one large reception room the

[1] Series of letters to and from Cardinal William Croy, c. May, 1519. Allen, epp. 957, 958, 959.

[2] Allen, ep. 348; Nichols, ep. 336. August, 1515. On this occasion, Erasmus wrote an epigram on the flood. Allen, ii, 124.

[3] Allen, ep. 1169, December 13, 1520.

[4] Allen, ep. 794.

[5] Allen, ep. 825.

[6] *Diversoria*, LB. i, 715–718. See A. Schultz: *Das häusliche Leben der europäischen Kulturvölker vom Mittelalter bis zur zweiten Hälfte des 18en Jahrhundert*, 1903, pp. 93, 395 f; E. S. Bates: *Touring in 1600*, 1911, pp. 240 ff.

guests gathered to dry their steaming clothes before a stove, filling the place with smells and sometimes with vermin. After an unappetizing meal of bread, sausage, pudding, and wine or beer, the guest would be led to a bedroom already occupied by other travelers of both sexes, lucky if he did not have to share his bed with a strange man. When, in 1523, Erasmus compared the luxury of French inns with the coarse entertainment provided by the German hostelries, the contrast may have been partly due to the higher standards he had now acquired in place of those which he held when, as a younger man, he had first traveled through the rich plains of Southern France. But let us hear what he has to say:

No one welcomes the newcomer, lest they should seem to solicit guests, for to do so would appear to them mean and low and beneath the high-mightiness of the German character. When you have been shouting for a long time some one puts his head, like a tortoise looking from its shell, out of the hot-air shafts[1] in which they live almost until midsummer. You must ask if you may stay and if he doesn't say "no" you conclude that you may have a place. You ask where the stables are and he shows you with a motion of his hand, for you may take care of your horse as best you can without a servant to help you. In the more famous inns a man shows you to the stables and carefully points out the worst stall for your horse, for they keep the better places for later arrivals, especially for the nobility. If you complain, the first thing you hear is, "If you don't like it here, go to another inn." In the cities it is all you can do to get a little hay, for which you have to pay as much as for oats. When you have cared for your horse you go to the common sweating-room,[2] filled with footwear, baggage, and mud, pull off your boots, put on your slippers, change your shirt if you like, and dry yourself and your clothes, dripping with rain, by the tile stove. If you wash your hands, the water is generally so filthy that you have to wash away the first ablution. . . . They crowd eighty or ninety persons into that sweating-room, footmen and horsemen, merchants, sailors, carters, farmers, women and children, sick and well. . . . One is combing his hair, another wiping off sweat, another cleaning his boots and legwear, another smells of garlic. Amid a confusion of

[1] "Æstuarium," literally "hot-air shaft," a sarcastic name for the overheated room detested by Erasmus.

[2] "Hypocaustum," a sarcastic name for the heated reception room.

men and tongues such as was once seen at Babel they stare at a foreigner like a new kind of animal from Africa. . . . Meantime it is a crime to ask for anything, for they will not serve anything until late in the evening, when they expect no more arrivals. Finally a hoary, bald, wrinkled, dirty old waiter appears . . . spreads the table, and gives each guest a wooden bowl, a wooden spoon, a glass cup, and some bread, which everyone munches until the soup is ready—that is, for about an hour.

If anyone tried to air the room by opening a window, all the rest would shout, "Shut it! Shut it!" and if he replied that he could not endure the heat, he was summarily invited to go to another inn. Finally, the amusements of the guests were unpleasant:

Frequently clowns mix with the company and, though they are the most detestable of men, you can hardly believe how much the Germans delight in them.[1] With their singing, chattering, clamor, jumping and blows, they make the hot room almost collapse and you can't hear anyone speak.

If these were the ordinary experiences of a traveler, sometimes they were much worse. The trip from Basle to Louvain in September, 1518, is thus vividly painted:[2]

Dear Beatus: Learn the whole tragicomedy of my journey. As you know, I was unwell when I left Basle, having not yet returned into Heaven's grace since I had so long led a sedentary life under stress of endless labor. The boat trip was not unpleasant except that the noonday sun became trying. At Breisach we lunched worse than you can imagine—the smell stifling and the flies worse than the smell. We sat at table half an hour before they brought us anything to eat, and when they did it was only dirty soup, scraps, and salted raw meat,[3] all very nauseous. I did not go into their hencoop,[4] for I had a slight fever. He who tended me told me a fine tale, that the Franciscan theologian with whom I had had a

[1] Albert Dürer speaks of the "rare, precious mummers" he saw at a banquet in carnival time, 1521. *Schriftlicher Nachlass*, p. 80.

[2] Erasmus to Beatus Rhenanus, Louvain, c. October 15, 1518; Allen, ep. 867. Allen iii, 392, gives the exact itinerary.

[3] Raw ham and raw salmon, smoked, are considered delicacies in Germany now.

[4] Another slighting name for the reception room.

disputation about "hæcceities"[1] had pawned some communion vessels as his own! O Scotist subtilty! Toward night we were turned out into a cold village the name of which I was not able to find out, nor, had I done so, should I wish to publish it. There I almost died. In one oven, not large, at almost ten o'clock more than sixty of us dined, such a promiscuous aggregation! As they became heated with wine, what a stink and what a noise! But we all had to sit still until the clock gave the signal to rise.

We were wakened early by the clamor of the sailors. I embarked hungry without having slept. We got to Strassburg before lunch, about nine. There we were better received, especially as Schürer furnished the wine. A part of the literary fellowship was already there and soon all came to greet me, none more affectionately than Gerbel. . . .

Thence we struggled on to Spires on horseback, seeing nothing of the cloud of war with which rumor had frightened us. My English horse almost foundered and hardly got to Spires because a rascally blacksmith had so maltreated him by burning the frogs of two of his feet with a hot iron. At Spires I furtively withdrew and betook myself to my neighbor Matermus. The learned and humane dean [Truchses] entertained us kindly for two days. By chance we found Hermann Busch there.

Thence by wagon I went to Worms, thence to Mainz . . . where I stayed not at the inn but at the house of a canon. When we left he took us to the boat. The voyage was, on account of the fair weather, not disagreeable except for its length and the smell of the horses. . . . When we came to Boppard and were walking on the shore while the boat was being searched, some one pointed me out to the toll-collector, saying, "*That is he.*"[2] The collector's name, if I mistake not, is Christopher Eschenfelder. It is incredible how the man jumped with joy. He took us to his house, where among his receipts we saw the works of Erasmus. He declared that he was happy, called his children, his wife, and all his friends. In the meantime he sent two bottles of wine to the sailors, who begged for it, and when they clamored for more sent them more bottles and promised he would remit the toll to him who had brought so great a man. . . .

[1] "Hæcceitas" is a word used by Duns Scotus, like "quidditas." It means "thisness," or "the form of individuality calculated to yield the absolute certainty of real actuality," says M. Heidegger: *Die Kategorien und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus*, 1916, p. 67 f; *cf.* also p. 12, which speaks of it as indicating "a greater and finer nearness to real life." By Erasmus of course used sarcastically, implying that this Scotist was a little too practical. Erasmus spoke of the words "hæcceitates, quidditates," as portentous words recently invented, in the *Moria*, LB. iv, 463A, 465B.

[2] Greek.

Having passed through Coblenz and Bonn we arrived at Cologne on Sunday morning before six, in bad weather. Having gone to the inn[1] I ordered the servants to prepare a wagon and have food ready at ten. I heard mass. Lunch was late. The wagon was not forthcoming. I tried to get a horse, for mine were useless. Nothing succeeded. I saw what they were about; they were trying to force us to stay. Immediately I ordered my servants to saddle the horses. I had one box put on a horse, and left another box with my host. Then with my lame horse I pushed on to the castle of the Count of Neuenaar, a journey of about five hours. I spent five days with him at Bedburg in such tranquillity and leisure that I got through with a good part of the revision of the New Testament. . . .

From this point the trip commences to be a tragedy. Erasmus departs from Bedburg in a terrific storm. The wagon is so rough on the stony road that he prefers even the lame horse. At Aix he is entertained by a canon and makes himself sick by eating disgusting raw fish, so that he is obliged to force himself to vomit by sticking his finger down his throat. Ulcers appear on his thighs and are made worse by riding. When he reaches Tongres he faints, but insists upon being carried on, though in terrible pain, to Louvain. There he is unable to get any physician to attend him, as they all believe he has the plague. Angry with them, he commends himself to Christ, eats nothing but eggs beaten in wine; while recovering, he works doggedly on the New Testament. His letters at this time are full of the most minute and painful descriptions of his symptoms, which indicate that he really had an attack of the disease now known as the bubonic plague, then endemic and frequently epidemic in Europe.[2]

During these years Erasmus was in correspondence with a man of some note in his day, Willibald Pirckheimer, of Nuremberg. This patrician had been born at Eichstädt in 1470, and given, by his wealthy father,

[1] According to a letter of Adolph Eichholz to Erasmus, dated Cologne, October 6, 1518, the latter, on passing through that city, had stopped at the White Horse Inn. Allen, 866.

[2] See article on the Plague in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th edition, 1910–11.

an exceptional education, including a seven years' visit to Italy (1490–97), where he studied Greek at the universities of Padua and Pavia. Returning to Nuremberg, he had been soon made Town Councilor, and, after attracting the attention of the Emperor Maximilian, appointed Imperial Councilor. He published a good deal, including translations of Plato. In 1504 he was left a widower with five daughters, whom he made as learned as were those of Sir Thomas More. His wealth and position enabled him to patronize men of talent, among whom first and foremost was the painter, Albert Dürer. A number of letters between the two, written during the year 1506 when the latter was at Venice, have survived,[1] and so have two portraits of Pirckheimer by the famous artist. Comparing the drawing of 1503 with the engraving of 1524,we note a remarkable degeneration in the character of the face,[2] a philosopher turned into a swine by drinking Circe's cup of sensuality.

Quite naturally Pirckheimer became interested in the author of the *Adages* and *Folly*, and in December, 1514, he wrote his friend, Beatus Rhenanus, asking for an introduction.[3] Receiving this immediately, he started a correspondence with Erasmus which lasted for the rest of his life. In 1515 Erasmus commended to his care the sister of the gentleman to whom he had dedicated the *Enchiridion*, and at his death he wrote an encomium in the form of a letter to Duke George.[4]

The Nuremberg councilor seems to have acted as an intermediary in getting for Erasmus a call to the University of Leipzig early in 1516.[5] The humanist was

[1] *Dürers Schriftlicher Nachlass*, 1908, pp. 120–150. Doctor Reicke and Doctor Reimann have undertaken to edit Pirckheimer's correspondence. For Pirckheimer's life, *Realencyklopädie*, Allen, ii, p. 40.

[2] The drawing, in Berlin, published in *Dürers Schriftlicher Nachlass*, p. 120. The engraving in *Klassiker der Kunst, Dürer*, 1908, p. 160.

[3] Allen, ep. 322, Pirckheimer to Rhenanus. December 9, 1514. *Cf. Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, no. 422 (autumn, 1513).

[4] May 15, 1531, Lond. xxvi, 33; LB. ep. 1187.

[5] Allen, ep. 527. A letter without date in the original, inclosing the proposition from Emser, rector of the university. Dr. Allen places this letter in 1517,

then unable to accept, but the plan was brought up again in 1520, by which date Erasmus had become friendly with Duke George of Albertine Saxony, whose capital Leipzig was. In the spring of 1516 the University of Ingolstadt made a flattering but vain attempt to secure the services of the noted scholar.[1]

Other honors came thick and fast. Not to mention expectations of preferment in France and a canonry at Tournay, the gift of which was disputed between the French and English governments, Erasmus in 1515 was made a member of the Privy Council of Prince Charles, soon to become king of Spain and afterward emperor.[2] Four years later the Burgundian Chancellor, John le Sauvage, tried to get Erasmus to supervise the studies of Charles's younger brother, Prince Ferdinand, then in his sixteenth year.[3] The scholar probably met the princes in the summer and autumn of 1516, when the court was at Brussels, and for Charles he wrote his treatise on the education of a Christian prince, but he declined to undertake the duties of preceptor for reasons which, he wrote, "it would not be safe to set down." These reasons are, however, explained in one of his *Adages*, first published in 1515,[4] and show that he had already gauged the difficulties of training a king.

> Now we see hardly any men educated more corruptly or laxly than those whom it is so very important to have brought up as well as possible. This child about to rule the world is committed to the charge of silly women, who are so far from instilling into his mind anything worthy of a prince, that they even dissuade him

but I agree with Doctor Reich and Mr. Nichols in placing it in January, 1516. In addition to the reasons given by Allen, ii, p. 452–453, may be mentioned the following: Pirckheimer expresses the hope that Erasmus will visit Nuremberg on the way to Leipzig. This would be convenient only if Erasmus was at Basle, as he was in January, 1516. In 1517 he was in the Netherlands.

[1] Allen, epp. 386, 418; Nichols, epp. 392, 400.

[2] Allen, ep. 370, note 18; Nichols, ii, 272; Allen, epp. 470, 565. On the trip to the Netherlands to meet Le Sauvage and perhaps Charles, Allen, ep. 412, and ii, p. 240; Nichols, ep. 399.

[3] Allen, epp. 917, 952.

[4] *Adagia*, "Aut Regem aut fatuum nasci oportere," chil. 1, cent. 3, prov. 1. LB. ii, 110.

from heeding the salutary admonitions of his tutor and the gentle impulses of his own nature. Everyone flatters, everyone agrees with him. The nobles applaud, the ministers comply, even the tutor adulates, not acting so as to make the prince a blessing to his country, but so as to accumulate a fortune for himself. The theologian commonly called his confessor also flatters him. . . . He hears himself called "sacred majesty, serenity, divinity, terrestrial god," and such like titles. In short, while yet a boy he learns nothing but how to play the tyrant. Soon he is put in the company of girls, all of whom invite his addresses, praise him, and serve his wishes. His court is a crowd of effeminate youths, whose only words and jests are of girls. The best part of his youth is consumed in gaming, dancing, music, and running hither and thither.

In May, 1516, Erasmus returned from Basle to the Netherlands, which he made his headquarters for the next five and a half years, living first chiefly at Antwerp and Brussels and, after July, 1517, chiefly at Louvain. At Antwerp he had a good friend in Peter Gilles, immortalized as More's host in the *Utopia*. Gilles, besides occupying the position of Chief Secretary of the city of Antwerp, devoted much attention to letters, for, though he wrote little himself, he edited important works for other men, who valued his advice. On the occasion of Gilles's marriage with Cornelia Sandria (1514) Erasmus wrote an epithalamium in which the three Graces and the nine Muses speak words of praise.[1] When, after bearing a number of children, Cornelia died, about August, 1526, Erasmus wrote her epitaph. Presently Gilles married again and when he lost this wife also his friend contributed an inscription to her memory.

While Erasmus was staying at the house of the Secretary of Antwerp, about May, 1517, he and his host had their pictures painted by the celebrated artist, Quentin Matsys,[2] both portraits being intended for presentation to Thomas More. The great humanist

[1] Later included in the *Colloquia*, LB. i, p. 746. On Gilles, Allen, i, p. 413; ii, p. 35; iii, p. 146.

[2] The original of Erasmus is at the Stroganoff Gallery at Rome; that of Gilles at Longford Castle, England. A copy of the Erasmus is at Hampton Court. Both pictures are reproduced in Allen, ii, 576. See Allen, 683, notes.

was represented sitting at a desk, with an open book before him, ready to write. When the paint was fresh it was possible to see that the book was the *Paraphrase to the Epistle to the Romans*, but the letters are no longer visible. On the forefinger of the delicately veined right hand a seal ring is conspicuous. The finely chiseled features wear a pensive expression, not at all like the satirical cast of countenance seen in Holbein's later portraits. There were two natures in the same man; one the scholar and theologian, represented by the *Enchiridion* and the edition of the *Greek Testament*, the other the sportive mocker, emerging in the *Moria*. Matsys, the painter of serious, religious pictures, saw the one side of the man; Holbein, the merry portrait-painter and caricaturist, the other. The boyish face of Gilles, in the diptych, makes a good contrast to its pendant. He is holding a letter of More in his hand,[1] and has before him a copy of the *Antibarbari*[2] by Erasmus—fit symbols of his fame depending mostly on his friends.

Both pictures were sent to More in September.[3] His letters[4] of acknowledgment to Erasmus and Gilles show how immensely pleased he was. To the former he wrote:

> You can more easily imagine than I can tell how delighted I am. For as the likenesses of such men done even in chalk or charcoal would captivate all who were not dead to admiration of learning and virtue, how can anyone express in words or fail to conceive how much I am ravished when the features of such friends are recalled to my memory, by pictures drawn with such art that they may challenge comparison with the works of any ancient painter? Whoever sees them would think them molded or sculptured rather than painted, so exactly do they seem to stand out in the exact proportions of the human figure. You cannot believe, dearest Erasmus, how much your care to please me has added to my love

[1] The writing is not legible, but More speaks of it. Allen, ep. 683.

[2] As the first known edition of this book was printed at Cologne in 1518, the title must have been added later, or this picture represents a manuscript, or previous edition, not now extant.

[3] Allen, ep. 654.

[4] Allen, epp. 683, 684.

for you, though I was sure before that nothing could add to it, nor how I glory in your esteem and in this token by which you declare that you prefer my love to that of anyone.

Having painted the portrait, Matsys proceeded to found some bronze medallions with a head of Erasmus, newly drawn and quite different from the first work. He did this in 1519, if we may assume that they are the same as the medallions bearing that date now extant in the museum at Basle and at the Luther-house in Wittenberg. A friend who saw one in 1528 considered it wonderfully lifelike.[1]

A still greater artist was next to try his hand on the famous writer. When Albert Dürer came to the Netherlands in 1520–21, he met Erasmus several times and, about September 1, 1520, made two sketches of him in charcoal, apparently with the intention of turning one of them into a painting, though he never found time to do this. Six years later he made an etching from one study, a copy of which he sent to Erasmus, who, though he praised the artist's other work highly, did not care for this and thought it "nothing like,"[2] and was even reported to have said, "If I look like that I am a great knave."[3] Indeed, neither of the two Dürer drawings was successful. The one, now at the Bonnat Museum, Paris, is nearly full-face. The half-closed, downcast eyes and the smiling mouth have a sweet expression not found so readily in the other portraits. The second sketch, worked up in the woodcut, is far more elaborate. The scholar is seated at his desk, writing, with a vase of flowers before him and surrounded by books. In one of the gouty hands is a quill, in the other the long,

[1] Henry Botteus to Erasmus, March 6, 1528, Enthoven, no. 60. Erasmus to Botteus, March 29, 1528, LB. ep. 954. Haarhans, *op. cit.*, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 8 Jahrgang, p. 145. See Allen, ep. 1092, and reproduction of this medallion opposite.

[2] A. Dürers *Schriftlicher Nachlass*, ed. Heidrich, 1908, p. 50, between August 28 and September 3, 1520. *Cf.* Lond. xxx, 29, 43; LB. epp. 631, 827, 954.

[3] Luther's *Tischreden*, Weimar, vi, 1921, no. 6886.

ERASMUS
Woodcut made by Albert Dürer

narrow inkhorn. The countenance, composed and earnest, is less fine and less attractive than it appears elsewhere. In fact, the artist is not giving us a character study, but a bit of the genre he loved; it is not so much Erasmus we see here as the typical scholar.

This ill success did not prevent Dürer from becoming an excellent friend of his sitter. He gave him three of his own drawings, and made likenesses of many of his friends.[1] One of these may possibly have been Sir Thomas More, who was at the time at the court of Charles V. But the portrait, if painted, has not been certainly identified.[2]

Various other likenesses of Erasmus made during these years can hardly be regarded as original studies. The best is perhaps an anonymous woodcut dated 1522, showing a fine profile. It claims to be drawn from life and bears the same inscription in Greek, meaning "His writings will show his image more truly," that is found on the medallion of 1519 and on the Dürer woodcut. In fact, not only this inscription, but the details of the posture, both here and in Dürer's woodcut, show that Matsys had created a type which other artists felt bound to follow. There are also extant a woodcut after Matsys ascribed to Cranach, a drawing by Jerome Hopfer probably after the medallion, but showing a more humorous expression, and a very poor drawing ascribed to Lucas van Leyden, dated 1521.

[1] *Dürers Niederländische Reise*, ed. J. Veth und S. Muller, 1918, i, 55, at Antwerp, August, 1520.

[2] Preserved Smith: "Dürer's Portrait of Sir Thomas More," *Scribner's Magazine*, May, 1912. The painting that I there identified with Thomas More, now in possession of Mrs. John Lowell Gardner, of Boston, has been thought by others to be a portrait of Lorenz Sterck, though there is no proof save the fact that Dürer is known to have made Sterck's portrait in the year 1521. *A. Dürers Niederländische Reise*, von J. Veth und S. Muller. 2 vols. 1918, vol. i, plate 57. A few years after the appearance of my article there turned up in Canada another painting claiming to be by Dürer of Sir Thomas More. It is reproduced in Veth and Muller, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. It was sold by G. A. Dostal of New York and Mme. Lucille Krier de Maucourant of Paris to G. F. Glason, of Montreal. New York *Times*, February 4, 1917. It is probably spurious.

But the artist who more than any other has given to posterity the pleasure of looking on this speaking, distinguished face, and who also entered so fully into the spirit of the satirist, was Hans Holbein the younger.[1] Born at Augsburg in 1497, he was taken by his father, a distinguished painter, to Basle in 1511. When he was barely eighteen years old (December, 1515) he borrowed a copy of Froben's edition of the *Praise of Folly*, 1515, from his friend and the author's, Oswald Myconius, master of St. Peter's school.[2] Very likely at Myconius's suggestion he covered the broad margins with those quaint and spirited drawings that have ever since been the appropriate illustrations of the book; the work being done, as the inscription says, in ten days in order to give Erasmus pleasure. There we see Folly, a fresh young maiden, beginning and ending her lecture to a crowd of boys in cap and bells. There is the theologian studying Duns Scotus, the pilgrim with his staff, the dunce with his doll, the schoolboy getting a sound spanking, all drawn from contemporary German life. More biting sarcasm is displayed in such pictures as that of the two humanists as asses braying forth each other's praise. The author is represented sitting at his desk writing his *Adagia*, and so wonderfully youthful and handsome does he look that when the picture was shown to him he exclaimed: "Oho! Oho! If Erasmus still looked like this, forsooth he would take a wife!" Was it he who wrote over the picture of a gay fellow guzzling and swilling, spilling his wine over a dish of trout and with one arm about a woman, the word "Holbein," to suggest that the artist was here caricaturing himself?

[1] A. B. Chamberlain: *Hans Holbein the Younger*, 2 vols., 1913, esp. i, pp. 45, 146, 166 ff, 288 ff, 338 ff. H. Knackfuss: *Holbein der Jüngere*, 1896, pp. 52 ff, 115. P. Gauthier: *H. Holbein*, 1907, pp. 20, 80 ff. Sandys: *History of Classical Scholarship*, 1908, ii, 132.

[2] Allen, iii, p. 382 f; ep. 739 n, J. B. Kan: Μωρίας Ἐγκώμιον, 1898, introduction. W. Hes: *Ambrosius Holbein*, 1911. K. Woermann: *Geschichte der Kunst aller Zeiten und Völker*, iv, 1919, pp. 497 f. One of the marginal illustrations has the date "December 29, 1515."

Though such a jest would have been taken in good part, Erasmus was probably not guilty of it.

After Hans had finished thirty-seven of these marginal illustrations including the Erasmus, the Pope, the Cardinal, the Bishop, and Duns Scotus, his brother Ambrose took the work in hand and added fifteen more drawings, including the one labeled, "Monks handle not gold, but women," the Hercules, the Chimæra, and other mythological subjects. Still later other artists added thirty drawings, much inferior in execution and often coarse in idea.

The illustrations of the *Folly* are reprinted with almost every edition, but those made by Holbein in another book of Erasmus are hardly known at all. There is at Harvard a copy of *In evangelium Lucae paraphrasis nunc prima nata et aedita* (Basle, 1523) the margins of which are decorated with twenty-seven original pen-and-ink drawings by Holbein.[1] They represent subjects such as Jesus, the Virgin, Dives and Lazarus on earth and in heaven. They are indeed exquisite little bits. It is most unfortunate that the binder of the book cut the margins so close as frequently to cut off some of the drawings.

When the humanist moved to Basle Holbein made several portraits of him, no less than three during the year 1523. One of these was a diptych with Froben, of which there is an early copy at Hampton Court. This and a three-quarters face, now at Longford Castle, were probably the two portraits that Erasmus said he sent to England in June, 1524, one of them as a present to Warham. Holbein also made another profile, which was sent as a gift to Boniface Amerbach at Avignon. It is probably the one now at the Louvre. These fine and beautiful studies exhibit at the very best the deli-

[1] Their genuineness, which seems highly probable to me, is testified to by an expert, the custodian of the Museum of Basle, D. Jouaust, in a letter dated Basle, August 26, 1869. He compared them with the originals of the *Folly* drawings. Preserved Smith: "Some Unpublished Drawings ascribed to Holbein," *Art in America*, February, 1917.

cacy and refinement of the original. The loveliness of the soul has wrought out upon the flesh a serene distinction, a serious purpose not without humor, a character upon which no evil passion has set its stamp. One can easily read the inscription carved upon the features by a lifetime spent in the high company of ancient philosophers and poets.

Perhaps at the suggestion of Erasmus, from whom he bore letters of introduction, Holbein set out for England about August 29, 1526, and there made a prodigious success, painting Warham, Fisher, and Sir Thomas More both alone and with his whole family.[1] He returned to Basle in August, 1528, bearing with him as a gift the picture of More's family. During his second visit to England, in 1530, he painted Henry VIII, his wives and courtiers.

Boniface Amerbach speaks of a portrait of the dead Erasmus by Holbein, but of this nothing else is known. A woodcut from one of Holbein's paintings was made by Lützelburger in 1530. In the next century Van Dyke engraved the same, but poorly, giving the face an expression not only grim and sarcastic, but positively pained.

During the years 1517–21 Erasmus occupied a somewhat indeterminate position at the University of Louvain.[2] Always suspected by the conservatives, he was now continually the object of some criticism or attack. One occasion for hostilities came with the founding of the new College of Three Languages to be a special

[1] LB. epp. Appendix 327 (wrongly dated 1523), appendix ep. 334 (wrongly dated 1525), appendix ep. 351. Lond. xxvi, 50; LB. ep. 1075, wrongly dated 1529 for 1528. On October 28, 1738, the Earl of Oxford saw at Mr. Lenthall's house at Burford a picture said to be More's family by Holbein, which he thought was not original. *Reports of Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Portland MSS., vi, 180. On August 16, 1669, Sir Harbottle Grimston saw at the Earl of Beaufort's seat at Badmington, Holbein's Erasmus. *MSS. of Earl of Verulam*, 1906, p. 248.

[2] He matriculated at Louvain as "Magister Erasmus de Roterodamis sacræ theologiæ professor," on August 30, 1517; see De Vocht in *English Historical Review*, January, 1922, pp. 89 ff.

home of the new learning. The money for the undertaking came from a bequest of Erasmus's wealthy friend, Jerome Busleiden, who died on August 27, 1517, and the humanist played an active part in carrying out the intention of the founder.[1] The natural antipathy of the old scholastics for the new Greek and Hebrew was aroused by this, and was further stimulated by an *Oration on the Knowledge of Various Languages*, written by Mosellanus of the University of Leipzig. This promising young man had already been in correspondence with Erasmus, who said of him "He loves glory, but he knows not what a weight glory is."[2] He was most fiercely attacked not only at home, but by one of the Louvain professors, a certain James Latomus. This man, who afterward figured actively as an inquisitor at the trial of William Tyndale, published a *Dialogue on the Three Languages and Theological Study*, beating Erasmus over the shoulders of Mosellanus. The Dutch humanist replied with an *Apology*, not mentioning the Saxon professor, but trying only to prove that he was not touched by Latomus's charges.

Further trouble came when Alard of Amsterdam announced that he would begin lecturing at the College of Three Languages on a book of Erasmus. This so fluttered the dove-cotes of the theological faculty that on March 8, 1519—the very day after the announcement was made—the rector of the university convoked a council which refused permission for the course. A bitter quarrel, patched up by a truce in September, broke out again in November. Meantime Erasmus's *Encomium of Marriage* had been attacked as heretical

[1] F. Nève: *Mémoire sur le collège des trois-langues a l'université de Louvain*, 1856. F. Nève: *La renaissance des lettres et l'essor de l'érudition dans les Pays-Bas*, 1890. H. de Jongh: *L'ancienne Faculté de Théologie de Louvain 1432–1540*, 1911. Allen, ep. 205. *Bibliotheca Belgica*, *s. v.* "Latomus: *De Trium Linguarum Collegio Dialogus*, 1519."

[2] Erasmus's remark on Mosellanus is preserved in *Luthers Tischreden*, Weimar, iv, no. 4921. On Mosellanus (whose real name was Peter Schade) see Allen, ii, p. 517. On this quarrel with Latomus see Pijper: *Primitiae pontificiae*, 1905, pp. 1–84.

by J. Robyns, on February 21, 1519, and thereafter trouble was chronic.[1]

A letter written just before the humanist left Louvain, on July 5, 1521, gives an interesting account of the university. Louvain, with three thousand students, is pronounced second to Paris, each college supporting one president, three professors, and twelve scholars entertained gratis, as well as some students who pay board. The auditorium is often crowded with classes numbering a hundred or more. The colleges are not inelegantly built, and the salaries large in proportion to the endowment, though small when compared with the needs of the teachers.[2]

By reason of his fame Erasmus was drawn to some small extent into public affairs. He heard with horror of the sack of Alkmaar by the Black Band, and approved of its dispersal.[3] He was at one time given a commission from the Emperor Maximilian to treat on some unknown matter with the University of Louvain.[4] He was occasionally found at the court of Margaret, regent of the Netherlands, and at that of Charles V after the latter returned to Brabant from his Spanish kingdom.[5] Among many famous men, he met Ferdinand Columbus, son of the Admiral, to whom, on October 7, 1520, he gave a copy of his *Antibarbari*. All that is known of the meeting comes from the inscription in this book, half in Spanish and half in Latin: "The author himself gave me this book, as appears on the eighth page. *Erasmus Roterodamus gave this as a present to Don Ferdinand Colon.* Louvain, on Sunday,

[1] De Jongh, *op. cit.*, p. 197 ff.

[2] To Daniel Tayspil, Anderlecht, July 5, 1521, Allen, ep. 1221. Luigi d'Aragona, who visited Louvain about this time, reports the number of students at six thousand, a great exaggeration. L. von Pastor: *Die Reise Luigis d'Aragona*, 1908, p. 56. Even Erasmus's figures may be too large.

[3] Allen, epp. 628, 832.

[4] Allen, epp. 669, 670.

[5] For a visit in company with Pace in May, 1519, see Allen, epp. 970, 971; *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Karl V*, ed. Wrede, ii, 685, note.

October 7, 1520. Erasmus himself wrote the first two lines here with his own hand."[1]

Erasmus's reputation was now such that, as a younger contemporary says, "all men desired his writings and regarded them with favor. A letter from him was a great glory and a splendid triumph to its recipient. He to whom was accorded the advantage of a meeting and some conversation seemed to himself one of the favorites of fortune." Occasionally young enthusiasts would make a regular pilgrimage to his residence. One of these devotees to visit him in October, 1518, was Eoban of Hesse, a lecturer at Erfurt and leader of the circle of humanists in that academy. In return for letters and gifts brought by him he took back a sheaf of epistles containing flattering allusions to his own facility in Latin prose and verse. These letters he published, with an account of his trip, in a booklet with the title *Hodœporicon*,[2] not altogether to the satisfaction of Erasmus. Seven months later another pilgrim to the shrine of letters came in the person of Justus Jonas, later known as a prominent Lutheran reformer.[3] At Erfurt, thoroughly Erasmian in 1520, Eoban lectured on the *Enchiridion*, another professor, Crafft, on the *Praise of Folly*, while Mutianus Rufus, the philosophic canon of Gotha near by, wrote to John Lang of Erfurt that Erasmus took the prize as the greatest of critics, and advised another friend to begin each lecture with a proverb culled from the Adagia.[4] When Lewis Platz was rector, in 1520, an official communication from the university asked and was answered by advice from Erasmus on the reform of the curriculum.[5]

[1] J. B. Thacher: *Christopher Columbus*, iii, 1904, 432 f. Read "la" for "laz." Allen, ep. 1147, introduction.

[2] In 1519. Copy at Harvard. The letters are reprinted by Allen, epp. 870 ff. *Cf.* Allen, ep. 982.

[3] Allen, ep. 876, 963.

[4] C. Krause: *Eoban Hess*, 1879, i, 288 f, 315; J. Burgdorf: *Johann Lange*, 1911, p. 24.

[5] J. C. H. Weissenborn: *Akten der Erfurter Universität*, 1884, ii, 314. L. C. ep. 281, Allen, ep. 1127.

From another university town came further proof that Erasmus was the best seller of his day. The accounts of John Dorne, an Oxford bookseller, for 1520, show that a third of all his sales were of works by Erasmus, the favorites being the *Enchiridion*, the *Adages*, and three textbooks of Latin style, the *Colloquies*, the *De Constructione*, and the *Copia*.[1]

[1] *Oxford Historical Society Collectanea*, 1885, I, 71–77. See T. M. Lindsay in *Cambridge History of English Literature*, iii, 1909, p. 19.

CHAPTER VII

THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE purpose that gave unity and nobility to Erasmus's life was his championship of "the philosophy of Christ," by which he understood a simple, rational, and classical Christianity. A prerequisite to the realization of his program was the publication and thorough scientific study of the ancient Christian texts. Biblical criticism, therefore, both textual and literary, occupied much of the best energies of his life. His aim was always practical—to aid reform, not primarily to produce a work of disinterested scholarship. But the achievement was great, and in the end accomplished much of what he wished in rationalizing religion. For his work was the effective beginning of that philological criticism of the Bible that, after so hard a battle, has at last done so much to free Christendom from the bondage of superstition and of the letter.[1]

By the opening of the sixteenth century the Vulgate—St. Jerome's version of the Bible, or, rather, his revision of still earlier Latin versions—had been printed many times. Though commonly esteemed, as it was later declared by the Council of Trent to be,[2] the authentic form of the Scriptures, and though referred to as "the accepted text,"[3] there was no standard edition of it,

[1] A. D. White: *Warfare of Science and Theology*, 1898, chap. xx, especially vol. ii, pp. 303 ff.

[2] In the decree of April 8, 1546. "Statuit et declarat, ut haec ipsa vetus et vulgata editio . . . pro authentica habeatur, et ut nemo illam reiicere quovis prætextu audeat vel præsumat." C. Mirbt: *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums*,[3] 1911, p. 211. *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie*,[3] "Bibelübersetzungen."

[3] Roger Bacon.

manuscripts and printed books differing from each other. Erasmus, who possessed an edition printed about 1465, and who examined many codices, noted this.[1]

The revival of Greek, together with that birth of a new spirit in the later Middle Ages, inevitably led to an examination of the Bible and to a discovery of the faults of the old version and a desire for fresh study. Lorenzo Valla's *Notes on the New Testament*, written about 1450, embodied the first attempt at a scientific criticism of the Vulgate. With three Latin and three Greek manuscripts in his hands, he had no difficulty in pointing out and in emending many errors both in readings and in translation.[2] Shortly afterward a humanist pope, Nicholas V, encouraged a competent scholar, Gianozzo Manetti, to make a new Latin version of the Bible from the original tongues, and the work was actually begun, though never completed. Manetti printed in parallel columns the oldest Latin version, known as the Itala, the Vulgate, and his own translation, and defended the undertaking against the attacks he easily foresaw.[3] Half a century later a highly cultivated woman, Isabella d'Este, employed a learned Jew to translate the Psalms from Hebrew, in order to be sure of getting their true meaning.[4] A number of scholars had now come to feel the need of a new exegesis, based on philological apparatus, not on outworn postulates of the schoolmen. Though John Colet was able to do little to supply the want, his broad, free lectures on St. Paul show that he felt it.[5] An immense stimulus to the study of Hebrew was given by John Reuchlin. A marked advance in biblical exegesis came with the publication, by the French savant, James Lefèvre d'Étaples, of the *Quintuplex Psalterium*, a Latin and

[1] LB. ix, 766.

[2] P. Monnier: *Le Quattrocento*, 1908, i, 284.

[3] *Cambridge Modern History*, i, 679; A. Humbert: *Origines de la théologie moderne*, 1911, pp. 117 ff.

[4] J. Cartwright: *Isabella d'Este*, 1903, i, 78.

[5] Published in several volumes by J. H. Lupton.

French edition of the Psalms, with commentary, in 1509, and of a new translation of the Pauline Epistles in 1512. In the early lectures of Luther, which have come down to us, we see how eagerly students were grasping at what the original tongues could tell them of the meaning of the Bible.[1]

Such was the situation when Erasmus took up the task. He did it under the widely diverse influences of Colet and of Valla, the one aglow with piety, the other as cold a rationalist as was ever born. Valla's *Notes on the New Testament*, as yet unprinted, Erasmus found in the Præmonstratensian Abbey of Parc near Louvain, in the autumn of 1504. Though he knew that to publish such an attack on the Vulgate would be attended with no little risk, he did so, in December, at Paris, with a preface that is mainly an apology for his temerity.[2] At the same time he urged the need of minute research, in words that are a defense of all detailed scholarship: "He is occupied with the smallest things, but such as the greatest cannot afford to neglect; he deals with minute points, but such as have serious consequences." The work had more importance than is generally recognized. With this initiation into biblical criticism we see the unfolding, or budding, of a new spirit. Sick and tired of the old glosses, the interminable subtleties that seemed beside the point, the age had at last found something fresh, the Bible treated in the spirit of Quintilian, not as an oracular riddle, but as a piece of literature. It was the skeptic Valla that first disclosed the true, sound method of exegesis, and thus uncovered the long-hidden meaning. The cock had found the pearl; the careless wayfarer had chanced upon the nugget of gold; the scoffer who sought to shame truth by unveiling her had made her more beautiful. And

[1] K. A. Meissinger: *Luthers Exegese in der Frühzeit*, 1911; O. Scheel: *Martin Luther, Vom Katholizismus zur Reformation*, 1917, ii, 210 ff. Preserved Smith: "Luther's Development of the Doctrine of Justification by Faith Only," *Harvard Theological Review*, 1913, 407 ff.

[2] Allen, i, p. 406, ep. 182; Nichols, ep. 182.

Erasmus was the man to perceive the value of the new treasure and to set it in a blaze of brilliants.[1]

It was probably at the instigation of Colet that Erasmus began an original Latin version of the New Testament. The work, embodying the matter he had acquired from Valla, and aiming at purity of Latin style, was completed in manuscript by October, 1506. After the return from Italy (1509) the labor of polishing the translation was taken up and the manuscript shown to Richard Bere, Abbot of Glastonbury. This gentleman, however, disapproved, and probably for that reason the idea of publishing it was postponed, not to be realized until the second edition of the Greek Testament, in 1519.[2]

Inevitably, when so many Greek classics were pouring from the press, the thought suggested itself to scholars of publishing the original of the sacred texts. Especially as the Hebrew Old Testament had long since been published by Jewish rabbis, it seemed shameful to neglect the specifically Christian writings. Cardinal Ximenes planned a sumptuous edition of the Bible in all ancient tongues and versions. The earliest volume, containing the New Testament, was printed, according to the colophon following the Greek text, by Arnold William de Brocario, at Alcalá, on January 10, 1514. After the text had been completed, however, the volume was kept back a considerable time, partly in order to allow the addition of a Greek vocabulary and other explanatory matter, partly in order to get the approval of the pope. This last was expressed in a breve printed in Vol. I of the Old Testament, dated March 22, 1520.[3]

[1] Humbert, *op. cit.*, p. 190 f. Meissinger, *op. cit.*, p. 86, for Luther's use of the *Annotationes*.

[2] Allen, ii, pp. 181–183; Lond. xviii, 46; LB. ep. 700, Erasmus to Bere, 1524. Wordsworth: *Old-Latin Biblical Texts*, 1883. *Realencyklopädie*,[3] iii, p. 57. Some sarcasm, undeserved in the light of the facts here given, has been leveled against Erasmus for the supposed speed with which he executed his translation.

[3] *Novum testamentum græce et latine in academia Complutensi noviter impressum*, 1514. *Vetus testamentum multiplici lingua nunc primum impressum. In hac præclarissima Complutensi universitate*, 1517.

It was perhaps some rumor of the forthcoming Spanish edition that hastened the completion of a plan that Erasmus had certainly entertained for many years. In March, 1516, he brought out his own Greek text under the title *Novum instrumentum omne, diligenter ab Erasmo Rot. recognitum et emendatum*, Basileæ Jo. Frobenius, mense februario, 1516. The word "Instrument"[1] chosen in conformity with the usage of Tertullian, and employed also by Jerome, by Rufinus, and by Augustine, was changed to "Testament" in the reprint of 1518, and in all subsequent editions. A Latin version differing little from the Vulgate was added to the Greek, and also copious notes. A new edition, revised, with the Erasmian Latin version of 1506, much more radical than the one used in 1516, was printed in 1519. A third edition followed in 1522; after which there was a fourth revision by the editor, as well as numerous reprints—no less than sixty-nine by the year 1536. The progress of the work, at least after 1512, can be followed with some closeness, but, without troubling ourselves with such details, let us glance at the results of the textual criticism, at the notes, at the Latin translation, and at the reception of the work by the public.

For the first edition Erasmus had before him ten manuscripts, four of which he found in England, and five at Basle, where they had been left by Cardinal John of Ragusa, when he attended the Council of Basle in 1431.[2] The last codex was lent him by John Reuchlin; it appeared to Erasmus so old that it might have come from the apostolic age, though modern critics assign it to the tenth or twelfth century. This codex, the best

[1] A. Harnack: *Die Entstehung des Neuen Testaments*, 1914, pp. 137 ff.

[2] Erasmus's statement in 1520 that "at different times he had used more than seven manuscripts" (LB. ix, 275) either errs on the side of modesty, or else he does not count all the manuscripts he had seen as having been "used." Full accounts of his work in A. Bludau: *Die beiden ersten Erasmus-Ausgaben des Neuen Testaments*, 1902. *Cf.* also, *Cambridge Modern History*, i, 599; *Realencyklopädie*, ii, 754 ff, article "Bibeltext des N. T."; P. S. Allen, ii, pp. 164 ff, 181 ff. E. Nestle: *Introduction to Text Criticism of the New Testament*, English trans., 1901.

he had, he utilized only for the Apocalypse, which was lacking in the other MSS. Neither did he use, save on rare occasions, the best of the Basle MSS. (twelfth century), for he believed that it had been altered to agree with the Vulgate.[1] The gospels he took almost entirely from a cursive codex (no. 2 of the Basle MSS.), probably of the fifteenth century, though possibly somewhat earlier; for the Acts and Epistles he used a slightly older codex, which he sent to the press without copying, but with a few corrections chalked out in red. The Apocalypse suffered most severely at his hands, for it was copied, by one of his assistants, with many gross errors, some of which have been perpetuated for centuries. Thus, the reading (Apoc. xvii:8) *οὐκ ἔστι καίπερ ἔστι* is a mistake for *οὐκ ἔστιν καὶ πάρεσται*. This slip was repeated not only in subsequent Greek editions, but crept into Luther's German, where it was first corrected in 1892; and into the Authorized English Bible, which reads, "is not and yet is"—the Revised Version altered the reading to "is not and shall come." As the last six verses were lacking altogether in his MS. Erasmus supplied them by translating the Vulgate into very lame Greek. His critical note, that he has "added some words from the Latin," hardly gives an adequate idea of the extent of his enterprise. But the work as a whole must not be judged by such dubious procedure, the butt of endless sarcasm by modern scholars. Erasmus actually did collate MSS. and on critical principles, though not the soundest. He was able, here and there, by means of grammatical and historical knowledge superior to that of his contemporaries, to improve the text by conjectural emendation. His wide reading in the early fathers stood him in good stead not only in elucidating, but in restoring the text.[2] He compared

[1] LB. ix, 1049D.

[2] One authority used by him in this manner was the *Commentary on the Gospels* by Theophylact of Bulgaria, called Vulgarius. *Cambridge Modern History*, i, 603.

the citations from the Old Testament with the Septuagint, and secured the services of Œcolampadius for a similar collation with the Hebrew.

Erasmus did not drop critical work with the publication of his first edition, for he introduced four hundred more alterations, not all improvements, in the second edition of 1519. For this he used a Latin MS. known as the Codex Aureus, lent him by Matthew Corvinus, King of Hungary, two MSS. from the Austin Priory of Corsendonk near Turnhout, and a Greek MS. lent him by the Monastery of Mount St. Agnes, near Zwolle. These he took with him to Basle for printing the second edition.[1] When in Brussels in 1520–21 he consulted two old MSS. at the library of St. Donation;[2] another he found at the Abbey of St. James at Liège, left there in the fourteenth century by Radulphus de Rivo.[3] When at last the Complutensian Polyglot was released, he also compared that. For a special text he had his friend Bombasius look up the Codex Vaticanus.[4]

This text was the famous "comma Johanneum," or the verse read in our Authorized Bibles as I John v: 7: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." The verse is an interpolation, first quoted and perhaps introduced by Priscillian (A.D. 380) as a pious fraud to convince doubters of the doctrine of the Trinity.[5] Not finding it in any Greek manuscript, Erasmus properly omitted it; for this honest, practically unavoidable conduct, he was ferociously attacked. Finding, from the report of Bombasius, that the Vatican Codex did not have it, he rashly asserted that if a single Greek MS.

[1] Allen, ii, pp. 164 ff.
[2] LB. ix, 353.
[3] A. Roersch: *Humanisme Belge*, 1910, p. 8.
[4] LB. ix, 353, and Allen, ep. 1213.
[5] W. R. Nicoll: *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, 1910, vol. v, p. 195. S. Reinach: *Orpheus*, English, 1909, p. 239. Houtin: *La Question biblique au XIXme siècle*, p. 220. E. Gibbon: *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Bury's edition, chapter xxxvii.

could be found containing it he would insert it. The required authority was soon found in the Codex Montfortianus of Trinity College, Dublin, which was, in all probability, manufactured entire for this express purpose.[1] Though Erasmus suspected the truth, and frankly expressed in a note the belief that the verse had been supplied from the Latin, he inserted it in his third edition (1522) "that there be no occasion for calumny."[2] Thus the forged verse was put back into the Greek to be kept there until the nineteenth century. Though omitted in the German version by Luther, it was put into the German Bible after his death, and is found in every other important translation of the Scriptures before the nineteenth century. It is still retained as a proof-text in Protestant creeds,[3] while the Roman Catholic Congregation of the Index has forbidden any question of its authenticity.[4]

Erasmus detected two other important early interpolations, the last twelve verses of Mark's gospel and the passage about the woman taken in adultery (John vii: 53–viii: 11). Though he retained them in his text, he honestly noted that the former passage was doubtful and that the latter was lacking in the best authorities. His other changes were slighter. The form in which he left the text was little improved by the labors of Beza and Estienne in the sixteenth century. The edition of 1633, differing little from his, became known as the "textus receptus," and was not substantially

[1] Such is the opinion of Caspar René Gregory; *cf. Biblical World* (Chicago), April, 1911, p. 256. E. Nestle: *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, English trans., 1901, p. 5, thinks that the forger was the English Franciscan, Roy. I do not know his reasons for this opinion, which seems to me not very probable.

[2] LB. ix, 353.

[3] *E.g.* in the *Westminster Catechism*, and the *Confession of Faith* published by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, chaps. ii, iii. Schaff: *Creeds of Christendom*, 1877, iii, 608; R. E. Thompson: *History of the Presbyterian Church*, 1895, p. 257. The proposal for revision was rejected in 1893.

[4] Decree of January 13, 1897; C. Mirbt: *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums*,[3] 1911, no. 540, quoting from the *Acta Sanctae Sedis*.

castigated until the labors of Tischendorf, and of Westcott and Hort, in the nineteenth century, restored the original on really scientific principles.

Though Erasmus claimed that his notes to the text should not be considered as a commentary, they fall, in their copiousness and variety, little short of being such. By pointing out how necessary it is to have details correct before going on to sublimer matters, he apologized for the attention paid to minutiæ. As it is in small points, he thinks, that theologians err, and as Christ has averred that no jot or tittle should pass away, it is necessary, even at the cost of much pains, to examine each word carefully.[1] Thus it is that every obscure word detains him for a moment, though at times he has little better to offer than an anecdote or a joke.[2]

The new Latin translation[3] elucidated as much as did the annotations. Many of his corrections were stylistic, as the substitution of "cum vidissent" for "videntes," in Mark ii:16, on which he observed, "It is strange that such a solecism should have been used when the Greek gave no occasion for it." Again, where the Vulgate translates Peter's words (Matthew, xvi:18), "Absit a te," Erasmus puts, "Propitius sit tibi," and noted that "Propitius sit tibi Deus" would be closer to the thought. Language is so nearly related to thought that some simple corrections of this sort had a wide bearing. Such was the substitution of "sermo," in John i:1, for the Vulgate "verbum," the word "sermo" having the connotation of rational discourse found in the Greek λόγος. In Matthew iii:2, and elsewhere, the Greek μετανοεῖτε was translated in the Vulgate "penitentiam agite," a phrase more than ambiguous on account of the Latin having but one word for the two distinct ideas of "repentance" and

[1] Introductory epistle, Allen, ep. 373.

[2] *Cf.* his note on δευτεροπρώτος, Luke vi:1. His New Testament is reprinted in LB., vol. vi.

[3] Also published separately in 1519 and often. Preface in Allen, ep. 1010.

"penance." The Vulgate version might mean either "repent ye," or "do penance," and had, of course, been usually taken by the Catholic doctors in the latter sense,[1] and had become a powerful support to the sacramental system. Rejecting this old translation, Erasmus proposed "Resipiscite," or "Ad mentem redite," "Be mindful," or "Come to yourselves." The leaven of this new rendering worked so powerfully in Luther's mind that it became the starting point of the Reformation and thus leavened the whole loaf of Christendom.[2]

Fine literary criticisms in the notes and in other writings in many cases anticipate the conclusions of later research. There was no hesitation in discriminating between the several books of the Bible. In the first place, he greatly preferred the New Testament, "where all is clear, plain truth, and where nothing savors of superstition and cruelty, but all is simplicity and gentleness,"[3] to the mysteries of the Old Testament, where truth is sometimes covered up in apparently indecent and silly fables.[4] How, he asks, could all the animals get into the ark? What are we to think of the story of Creation, of Samson, of the threats in Deuteronomy xxvii, of the minute regulations about leprosy and food—conducive rather to superstition than to true piety? These, he thinks, can only be explained as allegories. In the *Enchiridion* he had written, "Choose, in especial, those interpreters who depart as far as possible from the letter."[5] But in later life he came to regard the letter as more important and to save the allegories for moralizing otherwise incomprehensible or offensive por-

[1] *Cf.* the first of Luther's *Ninety-five Theses;* also T. More's *Confutation of Tyndale, Workes*, 1557, p. 418H. In the Douai version of the Bible μετάνοια is rendered "penance."

[2] Luther himself so spoke of the verse, quoting Erasmus's translation. *Resolutiones*, 1518, *Werke*, Weimar, i, 530.

[3] *Ecclesiastes*, 1535, LB. v, 1028 f; *cf.* 1043 ff.

[4] LB. v, 870.

[5] LB. v, 29BCD. On Erasmus's interpretation of the Bible *cf.* C. Beard: *The Reformation in Its Relation to Modern Thought and Knowledge*, 1883, p. 120 f, 150.

tions of the Holy text. Even in the *Enchiridion* he had said that, if one kept only to the literal sense, he might as well read Livy as the Book of Judges. In one of the *Adages*,[1] of the edition of 1515, he expressed himself as follows:

> If in the Old Testament you see nothing but history, and read that Adam was made from mud, that his little wife was unobtrusively drawn from his side while he slept, that the serpent tempted the little woman with forbidden fruit, that God walked in the cool of the evening, and that a guard was placed at the gates of Paradise to prevent the fugitives returning, would you not fancy the whole thing a fable from Homer's workshop? If you read of the incest of Lot, the whole story of Samson, the adultery of David, and how the senile king was cherished by a maiden, would that not be to chaste ears repulsively obscene? But under these wrappings, good Heavens! what splendid wisdom lies concealed.

The fact is that Erasmus's treatment of the Bible was the most rational possible in the light of the then available knowledge. If a passage yielded a clear historical or plain moral meaning as it stood, he took it literally. Only if it were repugnant either to reason or to ethics in its literal sense was a figurative interpretation employed. The great lack of the exegete of that day was the idea of development, of an evolution from a primitive to a higher ideal of religion and duty. Nowadays it is obvious even to the Sunday-school scholar that the same conception of God and the same ethical code cannot be expected in a Bedouin tribe wandering in the desert in the time of Homer, and in the most enlightened members of a polished empire in the age of Augustus. But this key for unlocking the mysteries of the Hebrew literature was as yet undiscovered. Assuming that the whole of Scripture was inspired and dictated by the same divine personality, the sixteenth-century philosopher could no more admit the imperfections of the Mosaic code than Plato could allow for the unedifying theology of Homer. With the

[1] "Sileni Alcibiadis," LB. ii, 773.

stubborn material and the stark premises at his command Erasmus did the best possible.

Among the New Testament writers he also had his favorites. The principal works he thought to be the Gospels, Acts, First Peter, First Epistle of John, and the Pauline Epistles except Hebrews.[1] He said that Matthew was probably originally written in Hebrew,[2] that Mark was an abridgment of Matthew,[3] and that Luke was not an eyewitness.[4] He repeated the opinion of Jerome that Clement of Rome was very likely the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.[5] James he thought lacking in apostolic majesty. He could easily believe that the heretic Cerinthus was the writer of the Apocalypse. Ephesians was Pauline in thought but not in language.

Rarely did Erasmus's comments lead him far into the field of dogmatic theology. Perhaps the most notable exception to this general rule was the note, that filled two finely printed folio pages, on Romans, v:12, "Wherefore since sin entered the world through one man." By way of examining the opinion of the fathers as to the meaning of this text, he canvassed the doctrine of original sin, taking, himself, the common-sense and humane view that however detrimental Adam's disobedience had been to his posterity, it certainly did not involve them all in his guilt. In this he was obliged to argue against Augustine. In other places, however, where an opportunity offered to go into speculative theology, Erasmus usually declined it. The note, for example, on "The just shall live by faith" (Romans, i:17), the verse which played so momentous a role in the history of the century, was confined to a mere comparison

[1] LB. v, 1049.
[2] LB. ix, 86.
[3] LB. vi, 151E, 217C.
[4] LB. vi, 218D.
[5] LB. v, 56C. *Cf.* Allen, ep. 1172: "By many arguments one may conjecture that it (the Epistle to the Hebrews) is not Paul's, for it is written in a rhetorical rather than in an apostolic style."

of the readings of the Hebrew and Septuagint in the words of Habakkuk quoted by Paul.

While abstract divinity left Erasmus cold, the practical application of a text to the criticism of some abuse in the Church always filled him with ardor. For example, the words, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will found my church," had commonly been taken as the charter of the papal primacy, but Erasmus pointed out the difficulty of applying them directly to the pope instead of to the whole body of Christians. Many another abuse and misapplication of Scripture was glanced at, but what drew down his most trenchant blows were scandals arising from monasticism and the celibacy of the clergy. How terrible are his words on that favorite text of the monks: "Some have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake."

> In this class [says he] we include those who by fraud or intimidation have been thrust into that life of celibacy where they are allowed to fornicate but not to marry, so that if they openly keep a concubine they are Christian priests, but if they take a wife they are burned. In my opinion parents would be much kinder to castrate their children than to expose them whole against their will to this temptation to lust.

Again, commenting on I Timothy, iii:2, which provides that a bishop shall be the husband of one wife, he ridiculed in no gentle terms those who torture the text to explain away its obvious meaning, as for example, those who understand "wife" to mean "church," or those who claim that the apostle desires to prohibit a man who has ever had more than one wife from being a bishop, and went on:

> The priest guilty of unchastity is allowed to become a bishop, so is the murderer, the pirate, the sodomite, the blasphemer, the parricide, and who not? Only he who has had two wives [in succession] is excluded from this honor. It is remarkable how grimly we hold on to some things and connive at others. If anyone will consider our present condition, how large a part of mankind is included in the herds of monks and colleges of priests, and will then observe how few of these are chaste, into what various lusts

countless numbers deviate, how shamelessly and openly and impudently they flaunt their vices, he will perhaps think it more expedient that those who cannot be continent should be allowed to marry publicly, as they could do without shame, purely and sacredly, rather than that they should be stained with such miserable and base lusts.

In the note on Matthew xi:30, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light," he went so far in the discussion of the many faults of the ecclesiastical system that the passage reads like a propagandist pamphlet rather than a commentary, and the author himself felt obliged to apologize for it.[1] Here he severely scored the innumerable human institutions which had grown up and choked the pure "philosophy of Christ," such as the speculations, bordering on impiety, about the nature of the Trinity, the superstitions connected with the sacraments and various religious rites, the regulations in the canon law, and the claims of the preachers of indulgences!

So it is plain that Erasmus saw the import of his work, and did not draw back from making the practical application. But to all who read the notes as a whole it is clear that the writer's immediate and constant, if not ultimate and dominating, aim was to construe the text accurately. In such a book this is, of course, as it should be. Erasmus performed the task with great success; his really explanatory and clarifying comments are a refreshing contrast to the interminable subtleties woven around the letter by the schoolmen. In fact, it is hard to say whether they won their greatest success as learning or as literature. Of late they have been reprinted, as most other notes on texts are printed, at the foot of the page, but then they were printed in a separate volume, in attractive type and style, and there is no doubt that they were widely read by themselves. Practically they constituted another pamphlet in favor

[1] The note is found in LB. vi, 63. It is partially translated by Bludau, p. 54, and by Humbert, p. 209 ff, and in my *Age of the Reformation*, pp. 58 f. Denifle makes the significant remark that it is first found in the edition of 1519, thus perhaps showing the influence of Luther.

of the Erasmian reform and of the philosophy of Christ. They were not forbidding and difficult, like modern commentaries which no one except a scholar can understand, they were chatty and companionable, full of anecdote and wit, and under it all an earnest purpose and the best liberal instruction to be found in matters of faith and piety. It was a novel and a fruitful idea at that time as it would be now to turn a work of biblical erudition into a best seller! To support his own position he introduces his humanist allies, Hutten and Colet, along with Augustine and Jerome, and marshals them all against those children of darkness, the *magistri nostri*. Both his success and the animosity he aroused were explained partly by the perfection of his style and still more by the fact that he was the first to look at the Bible and at religion in a human, rational way, to prefer the spirit to the form. Against Eck he maintained that a poor Greek style and even small inaccuracies due to faults of memory were perfectly consistent with the inspiration of the whole.[1] Against Colet he maintained that Christ's agony in the garden was due to a purely human apprehension of the terrible suffering in store for him.[2] The purpose of Christianity was to show love embodied in the person of Jesus and enshrined in the New Testament. His introduction pointed out, in beautiful words, that this was the whole value of the book: "If anyone shows us a relic of Christ's clothes we fall down, adore and kiss it, but it is only the gospels and epistles that efficaciously bring back to us the whole Christ."

The Preface to the New Testament was later expanded into a work on *The Method of Theology*, and published separately in 1519.[3] It proves what has just been said about the author's rational treatment of the Scriptures. After recommending a good life and reverence

[1] Allen, ep. 844.
[2] Allen, epp. 109–111.
[3] LB. v, 73 ff.

as prerequisite to a fruitful study of divinity, he pleads for a better knowledge of the original tongues as the foundation on which should be built a superstructure of dialectic, rhetoric, arithmetic, music, physics, cosmography, and history. In theology proper the first place is to be given to exegesis, in which the ancient fathers are to be preferred as authorities to the modern commentators, while dogmatics, Church history and discipline, civil and ecclesiastical law, and ethics are all to follow. Certain rules on method proper are added, as, for example, the correct formula for interpreting figurative language in the Scriptures and the recommendation to learn some passages by heart.

The Greek Testament, once out, met with a mixed reception. Prolonged applause from the liberals mingled with the hoots of the conservatives. Instinctively feeling that the work would need protection, Erasmus dedicated it to Leo X, at the same time requesting his friend, Bombasius, to get a formal breve approving publication.[1] As this was forthcoming, the editor was able to appeal to the approval of the pope in his subsequent dealings with his critics. Some of them were inclined to blame Leo for having lauded a work which, in the words of one of them, "has brought forward opinions on confession, on indulgence, on excommunication, on divorce, on the power of the pope and on other questions, which Luther only had to take over—save that Erasmus's poison is much more dangerous than Luther's."[2] Nevertheless, Leo's successor, Adrian VI,[3] approved in his turn and even urged Erasmus to do for the Old Testament what he had done for the new. After the Council of Trent had authorized the Vulgate and had condemned Erasmus, Cardinal William Sirleto made an elaborate

[1] Leo to Erasmus, September 10, 1518, Allen, ep. 864; Erasmus and Bombasius, Allen, epp. 865, 905.

[2] Aleander to Cardinal de' Medici, Worms, February 28, 1521, *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Karl V*, hg. von A. Kluckhohn und A. Wrede, ii, 523 f, P. Kalkoff: *Die Depeschen des Nuntius Aleander*,[2] 1898, p. 108.

[3] LB. ix, 764. Adrian "then a cardinal."

defense of the old Latin version against the criticisms of Valla and Erasmus.[1]

From most of his English friends Erasmus received hearty praise. Far from being shocked by the liberties taken with the Vulgate, Bishop Fisher was inclined to wish that the translation had been freer.[2] Thomas More wrote epigrams in honor of the work, vigorously defended it against several assailants, and recommended it to Cardinal Wolsey.[3] Colet wrote the editor in the following terms:[4]

I understand what you say in your letter about the New Testament. The copies of your edition are eagerly bought and everywhere read in this country. Many approve and admire your work; some also disapprove and carp at it . . . but these latter are men whose praise is blame and whose blame is praise. For my part, I love your work and welcome this edition of yours. . . . Do not stop, Erasmus, but, now that you have given us a better Latin version of the New Testament, illustrate it also with expositions and full commentaries on the Gospels. Length with you is brevity. The appetite will grow, if the digestive powers be healthy, in reading what you have written. If you unlock the meaning—as none can do better than yourself—you will confer a great benefit on the lovers of the Scripture, and will immortalize your name. Immortalize, do I say? The name of Erasmus will never perish; but, besides bringing eternal glory on your name you will now, in toiling for Jesus, win for yourself life everlasting.

The opposition in England, just spoken of, was strong enough to cause the book to be prohibited at Cambridge soon after its appearance. The conservatism of the human mind, and particularly of the theological mind, is such that it almost always retches at anything new and strange. When the old proof-texts are gone, it

[1] H. Hoepfl: *Kardinal Wilhelm Sirlets Annotationes zum Neuen Testament. Eine Verteidigung der Vulgata gegen Valla und Erasmus, nach ungedruckten Quellen*, 1908. *Biblische Studien*, Band xiii, no. 2. The date of Sirleto's work was 1549.

[2] Allen, ep. 481.

[3] More to a Theologian, published in Jortin's *Life of Erasmus*, 1760, ii, 670–99. The epigrams in praise of the New Testament, one of which was written in a copy presented by Erasmus to Wolsey, are found in *T. Mori Opera*, 1689, p. 253.

[4] Allen, ep. 423.

seems as if theology must crumble, and those who love theology promptly take alarm. Every version of the Scriptures, every serious and important criticism, from the Septuagint to the English Revised Version of 1881, has had to run the gauntlet of those who said, "the old wine is better." Erasmus ridiculed these fossils in a lively letter, comparing them to the old priest who, owning a breviary with the typographical error "mumpsimus" instead of "sumpsimus" at a certain point in the mass, became so accustomed to the nonsensical form that he refused to change it when the error was pointed out to him, and kept on mumbling "mumpsimus" to the end of his days.[1]

Because of the omission of the verse on the Three Heavenly Witnesses, and other similar changes that seemed to put the mark of doubt on favorite texts, Edward Lee, a rising diplomatist and theologian, later Archbishop of York, attacked the Greek Testament. Lee says that while he was at Louvain Erasmus had come to his house and asked for aid in revising the New Testament and that, when he had suggested many corrections, Erasmus was piqued.[2] Lee then wrote down his criticisms, which were copied by Erasmus's friend Martin Lipsius, and sent to the humanist. As the rumor of Lee's impending attack thickened, Erasmus forestalled it by a counter-attack in his *Apologia against James Latomus*, and also by threatening Lee with a book which he said the Germans, a ferocious people, were preparing against him. Notwithstanding these precautions, and the intervention of More, of Bishop Richard Foxe of Winchester, of Martin Lipsius, and of Richard Pace, Lee published his polemic in January, 1520.[3] The Dutch scholar, always sensitive, was wounded to the quick, and even inclined to believe that the mediation of his friends had been insincere. To Lipsius

[1] Allen, ep. 456.

[2] F. A. Gasquet: *The Eve of the Reformation*, New ed., 1900, pp. 154 f. E. Leus: *Annotations in Novum Testamentum Erasmi*, 1520.

[3] Allen, ep. 446, July 15, 1519. *Cf.* Allen, ep. 750, to Lipsius, January, 1518.

he wrote: "Lee acts with you as a lion with a lamb. . . . Would that you had not given him those other letters. . . . I trust him less than a cacodemon." Again, forgetting the tremendously high praise he had always given to England, he wrote the same friend that Lee's criticisms had made him hate Britain more than ever, though she had always been pestilent to him.[1] His suspicions of Pace were perhaps justified, for the latter, notwithstanding his unfortunate attempt at mediation in 1520, had already published a work blaming Erasmus and More for misspelling certain words and ridiculing the former for his poverty.[2] When Lee's notes came out, Erasmus promptly answered them,[3] though he also wrote that nothing sillier had ever appeared.[4] As a further means of humiliating his adversary he inspired his friends at Erfurt to publish a volume of Epigrams[5] in which Lee was called a son of Cerberus and of a Fury, from whom he had inherited his envious, infernal bark, a second Herostratus, a disease like gout, and whatever else the luxuriant imagination of the poets could think of. Erasmus also collected letters of his own admirers which expressed disparaging opinions of Lee, and published them in a separate volume.[6]

Another critic, Henry Standish, Bishop of St. Asaph, attacked Erasmus in an oration at St. Paul's Church Yard, London, for changing "verbum" into "sermo," in John i: 1. Against him, also, as "Bishop of St. Ass,"

[1] Allen, ep. 899. November, 1518. Erasmus to Foxe, asking him to intervene. Allen, ep. 973. More's letters to Lee, Jortin, ii, 646-662.

[2] *De Fructu qui ex doctrina percipitur*, 1517. Abstract of this work in Jortin, ii, 351 ff. *Cf.* further, Allen, ep. 350; 1097, 1098, 1099, 1100, and LB., App. ep. 275.

[3] *Ad notationes Ed. Lei.* LB. ix, 123 ff.

[4] Allen, ep. 1126.

[5] *In Edwardum Leeum Quorundam e Sodalitate Erphurdiense Erasmici nominis studiosorum Epigrammata*, May, 1520. C. Crause: *Hess*, 1879, i, 306.

[6] *Epistolae aliquot eruditorum virorum ex quibus perspicuum quanta sit Ed. Lei virulentia.* Basle, 1520. *Cf.* Jortin, ii, 371, 496 ff. G. Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des J. Jonas*, 1883, epp. 37, 41. Enthoven, ep. 3 (perhaps forwarding some of the letters). Lupset to Lee, Oxford, March 30 (1520), printed in Knight's *Life of Erasmus*, 1726, Appendix, no. 26, p. 82.

Erasmus published an apology.[1] The foolishness of his opponents was often the butt of his wit. For example, he recounts how a certain divine had attacked the study of Greek, but on being closely questioned by More in the presence of Henry VIII, admitted that all he knew of it was that it was derived from Hebrew. Of similar caliber was the Dominican who tried to persuade Queen Catharine that it was very wrong of Erasmus to correct the books of the wise and holy Jerome, as though he knew more than the saint.

In France the New Testament found less favor than in England. This was in part due to an unfortunate controversy between its editor and the man at the head of French liberal theology. As Lefèvre d'Étaples was at Paris in the years 1504–05, Erasmus must have met him then, but their correspondence, glowing with mutual admiration and friendship, did not begin until 1514.[2] The occasion for the breach was the proposal of Lefèvre, in his Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles (1512), to change the reading of Hebrews ii: 7, from, "Thou hast made him [Christ] a little lower than the angels," to, "Thou hast made him a little lower than God." When Erasmus rejected this emendation in his notes to the New Testament, Lefèvre replied in the second edition of his own work (1517) that "this assertion that Christ is not a little lower than God, and yet is below the lowest man, we refute energetically as impious and most unworthy of Christ and of God." Stirred by this charge of impiety, Erasmus published an *Apology*,[3] though he felt terribly sorry to be forced to take issue with his old friend, and would have preferred to write a volume in his praise rather than a short pamphlet in refutation of him.[4]

[1] LB. ix, 95.

[2] Allen, ep. 315.

[3] *Apologia adv. Fabrum Stapulensem*, 1518, LB. v, 17 ff. *Bibliotheca Belgica*, *s. v.* Allen, ep. 597. *Cf.* Nichols, ii, pp. 586, 601 f.

[4] Allen, ep. 652. c. September 7, 1517. For his change Lefèvre had the authority of the Hebrew text of Psalm viii:4. See English Revised Version.

So distasteful was the quarrel that he did his best to avert its further course by turning to common friends, Glarean[1] and William Budé, to mediate. Budé's somewhat curt refusal caused a strain in their relations, which was perhaps increased by mutual jealousy, for Budé, though not so great a writer, was a profounder student than was Erasmus. The Hollander revenged himself in a characteristic way, by publishing their correspondence[2] followed by a letter from the distinguished Christopher Longueil to a certain James Luke expressing surprise that King Francis I should prefer Erasmus to Budé, "a German to a Frenchman, a foreigner to a citizen, a stranger to an acquaintance." The climax of this witty but disingenuous attack on the French scholar was a letter from Erasmus to Longueil stuffed with transparently sarcastic praise of Budé.

In the meantime the quarrel with Lefèvre remained unappeased, notwithstanding a very friendly letter from Erasmus to his rival begging that a mere difference of opinion should not make them enemies.[3] Indeed, he greatly regretted the altercation. "Everyone," he wrote, "German, Italian, and English, congratulates me on conquering that Frenchman, but they cannot make me hate my victory less."[4] That Erasmus had the better of the controversy was in fact the opinion of impartial contemporaries. Luther, for example, though in general he preferred Lefèvre,[5] and though he regretted the strife between these two princes of learning, judged that in this case the Dutchman conquered and spoke the better.[6]

[1] Allen, ep. 766.

[2] In the *Farrago* of October, 1519. The letters are reproduced in their original order in Lond. iii, 51–63. The artful arrangement of the letters is of course destroyed by chronological redistribution. The letters, in this order, are in Allen, epp. 778, 810, 906, 723, 915, 930, 924, 929, 954, 914, 935. *Cf.* also Allen, ep. 1011, 1015.

[3] Allen, ep. 814, April 17, 1518.

[4] Allen ep. 794. *Cf.* also, epp. 675, 659.

[5] Enders, i, 88. March 1, 1517. L. C. ep. 30.

[6] Enders, i, 143. January 18, 1518. L. C. ep. 47.

The altercation with Lefèvre was a mere pin-prick compared with the severe chastisement administered to Erasmus by his old enemies of the Sorbonne. Noel Beda was aroused by the invitation to all men, even the laity, to read the Scriptures.[1] A debate on the new translations of Erasmus and Lefèvre was proposed in the faculty of theology. When one Dominican had the temerity to assert that the Vulgate was very faulty he was so harshly reprimanded that he promptly declared he had only advanced the obnoxious opinion in order to provoke a discussion. After a formal examination, the learned faculty condemned all new Latin versions of the Bible, mentioning those of Erasmus and Lefèvre by name.[2] The grounds for this decision were set forth by Peter Sutor in a pamphlet.[3]

A savage attack came from Spain. James Lopez de Stunica, one of the editors of the Complutensian Polyglot, perhaps stimulated by jealousy, prepared with extraordinary speed 165 notes on Erasmus's New Testament, and showed them to Cardinal Ximenes, for approval.[4] As this was not granted, the publication of the attack was delayed until Ximenes's death. Erasmus frankly admitted that he had learned much from Stunica; he nevertheless published an apology against the calumnies of this too virulent critic.[5]

As Louvain was the center of old-fashioned scholasticism, it was natural that the Erasmian Testament should there excite considerable opposition, most of which, however, developed after the beginning of the Lutheran revolt. Even before its publication one of the Louvain Professors, Martin Dorp, had begged the

[1] LB. ix, 456.

[2] Humbert: *Origines de la théologie moderne*, 1911, pp. 207 f. L. Delisle: *Notice sur un Registre des Procès-Verbaux de la Faculté de théologie à Paris*, 1899, p. 56.

[3] *De Tralatione Bibliæ et Novarum Reprobatione interpretationum*, 1525.

[4] Bludau, *op. cit.*, 125 ff. J. L. Stunica: *Annotationes contra Erasmum in defensionem tralationis Novi Testamenti*, 1519. Allen, iv, 623 ff.

[5] *In J. Lopim Stunicam non admodum circumspectum calumniatorem apologia.* LB. ix, 283.

editor to consider carefully the expediency of trying to improve the version sanctified by long use; and had quoted in this connection Augustine's words, "I would not believe the gospel but for the authority of the Church." The answers given by More and Erasmus, however, finally converted this opponent into a friend and supporter.[1]

But it was in Germany that the work had its greatest immediate influence. There, as elsewhere, some offence was taken by the conservatives; John Eck, for instance, professor at Ingolstadt and a pillar of the Church, was scandalized by the opinion of Erasmus that the Greek of the apostles was not so good as that of Demosthenes, and that the Evangelists occasionally made mistakes.[2] Another backward-looking scholar, Augustine Alfeld, attacked Erasmus for translating κεχαριτωμένη "gratiosa," instead of "gratia plena," as in the Vulgate, Luke i: 28.[3]

But among the liberals the work was applauded and studied. Ulrich Zasius, the jurist of Freiburg in the Breisgau, celebrated the "clearer sense and better Latin" of Erasmus's version.[4] On the men later to be Reformers the influence of the work was incalculable. Wolfgang Capito studied it carefully. Œcolampadius had assisted in the preparation of the text and now expressed high approval of it. Melanchthon praised it as divinely guided and happy in its issue in fulfilling the author's purpose to improve studies and dispel darkness and the vanity of many errors by the rising sun of truth.[5] Ulrich Zwingli bought, transcribed, and annotated a copy with his own hands.[6] Andrew Bodenstein, called Carlstadt, thought the editor "the prince of theologians,"[7] and studied the

[1] Allen, epp. 304, 337, 347, 338.
[2] Allen, epp. 769, 844.
[3] L. Lemmens: *A. Alfeld*, 1899, p. 79, n. 3.
[4] *Udalrici Zasii Epistolae*, ed. J. A. Riegger, 1774, i, 288. Hexastich to Erasmus's New Testament, 1516.
[5] *Declamatio de Erasmo*, *Corpus Reformatorum*, xi, 264 (1557).
[6] Z. W., i, 61; iii, 208.
[7] O. Seitz: *Der authentische Text der Leipziger Disputation*, 1908, p. 41.

text with a zeal that sometimes outran knowledge.[1] Doubtless many of the minor Reformers, of all stripes and shades, perused the labors of Erasmus and profited by them.[2]

On Luther, the richest nature and the most independent character among the Reformers, it is perhaps worth while to trace the influence more in detail, for it will explain much in the history of Protestantism. We can see what an immense stimulus the work gave to the Saxon monk's development, and yet how even from the first there is traceable an undertone of suspicion and hostility which became more pronounced with years. At the time of the New Testament's appearance Luther was lecturing on Romans, using as his chief guide the edition of Lefèvre d' Étaples. He apparently secured the new edition at the earliest possible moment, and from that time forth, beginning, namely, with the ninth chapter of the epistle, he took Erasmus as his chief authority in exegesis.[3]

The Erasmian influence on Luther's exegesis, perhaps under the stimulus of Melanchthon's praise, rose to its height in the Commentary on Galatians, first given as university lectures in 1516–17, and then published in 1519. Not only was the Dutch scholar often quoted directly, but the whole angle of presentation was the humanistic and literal instead of the scholastic and allegorical. A little later, however, the more deeply religious interest came to its own and inevitably the clear human

[1] In the text *τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου* (this is my body, Matthew, xxvi:26) Carlstadt argued that Christ could not mean that the bread was his body because *τοῦτο* was neuter whereas *ἄρτος* was masculine. See Preserved Smith: *A Short History of Christian Theophagy*, 1922, p. 127.

[2] At Cornell there is a copy of the first edition of the Greek Testament with the statement that it was bought for J. Salandronius at the fair at Chur on St. Paul's Day, 1517. Salandronius, or Salzmann, was a minor Swiss Reformer, a friend of Zwingli.

[3] Ficker: *Luthers Vorlesung über den Römerbrief*, Leipzig, 1908. Preserved Smith: *Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, 23 ff. Preserved Smith: "Luther's Development of the Doctrine of Justification by Faith Only," *Harvard Theological Review*, 1913.

method of Erasmus was less followed. In the edition of the Commentary on Galatians published in 1523 all references to Erasmus were suppressed, and in the lectures on the same Epistle given in 1531 the older scholar was mentioned only to be refuted.[1] Indeed, by this time Luther had purchased the fourth edition of the Greek Testament (Basle, 1527) and no less than 470 marginal notes in his own hand embody an extremely unfriendly criticism of the editor.[2]

Though many of Luther's specific judgments on books of the New Testament, as those on the Epistle of James and on the Apocalypse, are but echoes of Erasmus, or developments of his thought in stronger form, he found in time the rational method of the humanist so distasteful to him that he wished that this scholar would abstain from treating the Scriptures, for his only service was to introduce a knowledge of the tongues, while to sound the deeper meaning of the truth was beyond his power.[3] Finally,[4] he came to see in the whole critical method with its "thus Augustine reads," "thus Jerome understands," only a stamping of doubt on the most precious passages of the Word of God and a fostering of skepticism.

But the most important service of the Greek Testament has yet to be mentioned. It was the fountain and source from which flowed the new translations into the vernaculars which like rivers irrigated the dry lands of the mediæval Church and made them blossom into a more enlightened and lovely form of religion. There had, indeed, been previous translations into several of

[1] *Luthers Vorlesung über den Galaterbrief 1516–17*, hg. Hans von Schubert, 1918. Commentary on Galatians, *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, the lectures of 1519, ii, 436 ff, with special references to Erasmus on pp. 452, 476, 508, 598, 601. The lectures of 1531, *ibid.*, vol. xl. On this see G. Ellinger: *Philipp Melanchthon*, 1902; A. Humbert: *Origines de la théologie moderne*, 1911, pp. 247 f.

[2] *Lutherstudien zur 4 Jahrhundertfeier der Reformation*, 1917, p. 244. The book is at the Library of the University of Groningen, Holland.

[3] L.C. ep. 591.

[4] *Conversations with Luther*, pp. 111 f.

the modern languages, but they had all been made from the Vulgate, and to the errors of that version the poor scholarship of the translators had added a number of others. It was not until the Greek text was published that a really scholarly rendering was possible. Erasmus himself foresaw the use to which his work would be put and cordially approved of it. In the first edition of 1516[1] he says:—

I vehemently dissent from those who would not have private persons read the Holy Scriptures nor have them translated into the vulgar tongues, as though either Christ taught such difficult doctrines that they can only be understood by a few theologians, or the safety of the Christian religion lay in ignorance of it. I should like all women to read the Gospel and the Epistles of Paul. Would that they were translated into all languages so that not only Scotch and Irish, but Turks and Saracens might be able to read and know them.

In the preface to the third edition, dated Basle, January 14, 1522,[2] Erasmus expanded this passage, in beautiful words expressing his wish that all might come to Christ and drink of the Gospels.

Some think it an offence to have the sacred books turned into English or French, but the evangelists turned into Greek what Christ spoke in Syriac, nor did the Latins fear to turn the words of Christ into the Roman tongue—that is, to offer them to the promiscuous multitude.

He goes on to wish that they could be translated into all languages, French, English, German, and Hindustani, for it is both indecorous and ridiculous that laymen and women should, like parrots, repeat their Psalms and paternosters in Latin which they do not comprehend. . . .

Like St. Jerome I think it a great triumph and glory to the cross if it is celebrated by the tongues of all men; if the farmer at the plow sings some of the mystic Psalms, and the weaver sitting at

[1] In the Paraclesis, or introduction without pagination. I quote from the copy at Harvard. The same passage in the edition of 1519 in the British Museum copy, p. 8. St. Chrysostom may have suggested to Erasmus this passage on Bible-reading. *Cf.* his Homily 35 on Genesis xii. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, liii, 323.

[2] Lond. xxix, 82. Luther's New Testament was not out yet.

the shuttle often refreshes himself with something from the Gospel. Let the pilot at the rudder hum over a sacred tune, and the matron sitting with gossip or friend at the colander recite something from it.

In closing, Erasmus anticipates Luther's catechetical labors by suggesting that children be given regular instruction in the Gospel and in the obligation of their baptismal vows, and that books for the purpose should be written representing Jesus as gentle as he really was.

While Erasmus wrote these words the German New Testament was being completed. It was translated at the Wartburg from the Greek edition of 1519. It is quite possible that the Dutch scholar's preface to that edition first suggested the enterprise to the Reformer.[1] By a lucky accident it was the best of all the Erasmian editions and the translator's labors show constant, almost incalculable, use of the lucubrations of his predecessor.[2]

The next year saw a new French version, made by Lefèvre d' Étaples, who, though he used the Latin Vulgate, knew the Greek from other sources, and did not agree with all of Erasmus's readings, was unable to ignore the work of his rival.

William Tyndale, who had probably heard Erasmus lecture at Cambridge, printed in 1525 at Cologne the first English New Testament[3] based on the Greek text, and strongly showing the influence of both Erasmus and Luther. This version was violently attacked by More, in a *Dialogue*, on the ground of three thousand supposed errors, among them the use of the words "congregation" instead of "church," and "elder" instead of "priest." When Tyndale defended himself by showing that in both cases he had but followed a hint

[1] In Luther's letter to Lang, December 18, 1521, where he first speaks of his translation, he seems to have Erasmus's words in mind. Enders, iii, 256; L. C. ep. 518.

[2] Momfret: *History of the English Bible* (ed. 1906) gives in parallel columns selections from the Erasmian and Lutheran versions.

[3] It is strange that whereas there are extant several earlier printed editions of the whole or parts of the Bible in German and French there should be none in English. An old translation there was, which circulated only in MS., attributed to Wyclif. *Cf.* A. W. Pollard, *Records of the English Bible*, 1911, p. 1.

of Erasmus in Latin, "More's darling," Sir Thomas replied with more temper than force that, though the translations were the same in appearance, yet Tyndale's was informed with a malicious spirit not found in Erasmus's.[1] At the same time More professed to believe that a properly executed version in the vulgar tongue would be useful, and even argued liberally, though, to judge from the later decree of the Council of Trent, erroneously, that the Church herself attributed infallibility to the original texts, and not to the Vulgate.[2]

The Spanish translation of the New Testament, made by Francis de Enzinas, and published at Antwerp in 1543, was also based on the work of Erasmus.[3]

Colet's request that Erasmus should follow up his editorial work with an extended commentary was answered by the production of a number of *Paraphrases* of the books of the New Testament.[4] In this full, free, and popular form the author felt that he could best exhibit the thought of the inspired writers. All the materials at his command were skillfully worked into a scheme following the order of the original Scripture, while immensely expanding and beautifully interpreting it. The first *Paraphrase* to be completed was dedicated to Cardinal Domenico Grimani, on November 13, 1517. The four Gospels were inscribed to four friendly monarchs; Matthew to the Emperor Charles V,[5] Mark with an introductory letter on the wickedness of war, to Francis I; Luke to Henry VIII; and John to Ferdinand of Austria, king of Hungary and Bohemia, and later emperor.

[1] *More's Workes*, 1557, pp. 422, 425, "Confutation of Tyndale's Answer."
[2] *Mori Opera*, 1689, p. 296, "Responsio ad Lutherum."
[3] A. Bonilla y San Martin, in *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, p. 428. Enzinas's own memoirs do not speak of the original. *Collection des Mémoires sur l'Histoire de Belgique*, 2 vols., 1862–3. The dependence of Enzinas on Erasmus was noticed by the seventeenth-century scholar, Richard Simon, quoted by E. Boehmer: *Spanish Reformers*, i, 140, note B.
[4] All reproduced in LB. vii. *Cf.* Allen, epp. 710, 916, 956.
[5] Charles's letter thanking Erasmus, dated Brussels, April 1, 1522, printed in *Geldenhauers Collectanea*, ed. Prinsen, 1900, pp. 62 f.

The Swiss Reformer, Leo Jud, translated the *Paraphrases* on the Epistles into German in 1523; a German version of those on the Gospels appeared in 1530. A Bohemian version of the *Paraphrase on Matthew* appeared in 1542; and a French version of the *Epistles* in 1543. A number of English scholars undertook, in 1543, with the support of Queen Catharine Parr, to bring out vernacular translations; the Gospel of John being intrusted to the Princess Mary. The Injunctions of Edward VI, of July 31, 1547, ordered that the clergy should put in every church a copy of the *Paraphrase on the Gospels*—perhaps the only part of the whole work as yet ready in English—and that every parson below the rank of B. D. should provide himself with a copy.[1] Under Elizabeth these Injunctions, with slight modifications, were renewed.

From this it will be seen what popularity the *Paraphrases* long enjoyed. The purpose of the author, "to close up gaps, to soften abrupt transitions, to reduce the confused to order, to smooth out involved sentences, to explain knotty points, to illuminate dark places, to grant Hebraisms the Roman franchise, in short to modernize the language of St. Paul, heavenly orator as he is,"[2] all this and more was accomplished. Here was no longer a crabbed, pedantic, artificial interpretation of the text, but something to tell men, for the first time in that new age, what the Bible really said and

[1] Allen, ep. 710, introduction; Gee and Hardy: *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, pp. 421, 425; *Miscellaneous Writings of T. Cranmer*, ed. Parker Society, 1846, "Acts of Visitation of 1548," ii, 155 ff, 499, 501. The copy of the book at the Congregational Library, 14 Beacon St., Boston, Massachusetts, has the title: *The first tome or volume of the Paraphrases of Erasmus upon the newe testamente.* Enprinted at London . . . by Edwarde Whitchurche, January 31, 1548. Translated by order of Queen Catherine Parr. Vol. ii, dated August 16, 1549. The dedication is to Edward VI. No name of translator is given. A letter of Queen Catherine Parr to Princess Mary, September 20, 1544, speaks of Mary's translation as just completed with the help of Francis Mallet. *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Persons*, ed. M. H. E. Wood, 1846, iii, 180 f. Nicholas Udal's Preface also speaks of Princess Mary's work.

[2] Allen, ep. 710.

meant. Most of them rejoiced in the dawning light. A few found even the Erasmian eloquence tame after the sublimity of the sacred text. "It is dangerous to try to be more elegant than the Holy Spirit," wrote Lefèvre, with a glance at the *Paraphrases*, in the Introduction to his French New Testament.[1] "How ridiculous," thought Luther, "are those who, for the sake of style, put the Bible into paraphrase!"[2] "And," chimed in Roger Ascham,[3] "Erasmus's *Paraphrases*, being never so good, shall never banish the New Testament."

[1] Herminjard: *Correspondance des Reformateurs des Pays de la langue française*, i.
[2] *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, xlii, 2 (1544).
[3] Roger Ascham: *The Schoolmaster* (1563), *English Works*, 1761, p. 289.

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

IN an age of great editors Erasmus was one of the most prolific as well as one of the ablest. When modern scholars, who, devoting their lives to the study of one author, or a few, find themselves in a position to improve the texts first published, they should remember how vast and how virgin a field invited the labors of their forbears. At that time it seemed more important to get out as much material as possible, than to apply intensive study to a smaller field. Moreover, the difficulties confronting the first editors were greater than those met with to-day. For the most part they had as sources few and late manuscripts, often the work of poor copyists unable to deal with the harder passages. Greek and Hebrew quotations in Latin manuscripts were either entirely omitted or unintelligently imitated; even knotty points and obscure words in Latin were plausibly but incorrectly misread. The textual emendations of Erasmus were noteworthy; he corrected four thousand corruptions in the text of Seneca alone, and in one case at least, where he restored *auxesin faciens* for *aures inficiens* in Augustine he showed himself equal to Bentley. In general, his editions of the fathers were superior in quality to his work on the New Testament. His sense of style was keen, however much his knowledge was occasionally at fault. He was not sure whether Irenæus wrote in Latin or in Greek, and he repudiated Chrysostom's *Homily on the Acts*, now known to be a genuine though a poor work. On the other hand, he rightly declared the *Opus imperfectum in Matthæum*, widely circulated under the name of Chrysostom, to be an Arian

forgery. The most serious charge brought against him as an editor is that, in order to give authoritative expression to his own views, he published, as a work of Cyprian, a treatise entitled *De Duplici Martyrio*, composed by himself.[1] This charge, however, though supported by eminent authority, must be regarded as disproved. If the pseudonymous tract were really from the pen of the great scholar, it would be a shock to find him speaking of the wars of Diocletian against the Turks! Its purpose, to show that one could be a martyr—*i.e.* a witness to Christ, not only by blood but by good deeds—is indeed worked out in thoroughly Erasmian style, with many parallel passages to his notes on the New Testament. Nevertheless, it is quite certain that it was the production of another rational pietist, who wished to advance the evangelic cause by fathering his own ideas on one of the doctors of the Church.

Undoubtedly the Christian writer preferred by Erasmus was Jerome. Like many of his contemporaries[2] he was attracted by this least theological of theologians, this man of the world among saints, this pure Latinist among barbarians. As early as 1500 he thought of bringing out an edition of this doctor, for reasons thus stated:—[3]

> My mind has long burned with incredible ardor to illustrate with a commentary the Epistles of Jerome. In daring to conceive so

[1] F. Lezius: *Neue Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1895, iv, 95–110, 184–243. A. Harnack: *Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur*, 1904, ii, 369. J. A. Faulkner: *Erasmus, The Scholar*, 1907, pp. 236 ff. The work is not in the Erasmian edition of *Opera Cypriani*, Basle, 1521 (at Harvard). It is said to have appeared first in the edition of 1530. I have read it in an edition published at Antwerp, 1568, pp. 581 ff. The editor, James Pamelius shows that it cannot be by Cyprian, and says that Henry Gravius attributed it to Erasmus, on internal evidence, when he re-edited Cyprian in 1544. See further Allen, ep. 1000.

[2] Jerome's popularity is shown by the numerous early editions of his works, than which none are more often met with in second-hand catalogues. There was an Italian translation of his letters: *Epistole de sancto Hieronymo volgare*, Ferrara, 1497, and a French one: *Les Epistres de monseigneur sainct Hierosme en françois*, Paris, 1520.

[3] Allen, ep. 141; Nichols, ep. 134. *Cf.* Allen, ep. 138, and ii, pp. 210 f.

great a design, which no one has hitherto attempted, I feel that some god inflames and directs my heart. I am moved by the piety of that heavenly man, of all Christians beyond question the most learned and most eloquent; whose writings, though they deserve to be read and learned everywhere and by all, are read by few, admired by fewer still and understood by scarcely any. . . . I am not unaware of the audacity of my presumption. What a task it will be, in the first place, to clear away the errors, which during so many ages have become established in the text. What a mass there is in his works of antiquities, of Greek literature, of history—and then what a style, what a mastery of language, in which he has left not only all Christian authors far behind him, but seems to vie with Cicero himself!

As time went on Erasmus felt more deeply drawn to Jerome for reasons he has not mentioned here. In the hermit of Bethlehem who translated the Scriptures, who cultivated the tongues, who loved the classics, who cared so little for systematic theology and so much for life, he saw the prototype of his own mind and the champion of the "philosophy of Christ." In such respect Jerome was a perfect contrast to Augustine, the great thinker, the explainer of God's ways, the asserter of determinism and of total depravity. There have always been the two types of mind in the Church. The two New Testament writers, St. Paul and St. John, who first worked over the simple materials of the Synoptic Gospels, represent the same tendencies, the one to a hard and fast system, the other to the expression and glorification of a life. Again, fifteen hundred years later, Erasmus and Luther typified the same diversity, and Luther, with his customary insight, detected the difference at once.[1]

I do not doubt [he wrote] that I differ from Erasmus in interpreting Scripture because I prefer Augustine to Jerome as much as he in all things prefers Jerome to Augustine. . . . The reason for my preference is that I realize that Jerome seems even intentionally to descend to a purely historic interpretation, so that, strange to say, his best exegesis of Scripture is in the *obiter dicta* in his epistles and elsewhere rather than in his commentaries.

[1] Luther to Spalatin, October 19, 1516. Enders, i, 63, L. C. ep. 21.

The dogmatic Augustine attracted the dogmatic Reformer; the humane Jerome the humanist. "I have always avoided the character of a dogmatist," wrote Erasmus, "except in incidental admonitions about improving studies and about human judgment." He had always labored, he added, to bring scholastic theology back to its sources.[1] For this reason he often expressed his preference for all the ancient fathers as against Aquinas and Scotus. He thought the rivulets of truth purer as they approached the divine spring.

Hearing that the Amerbachs were preparing Jerome for publication by Froben, Erasmus immediately communicated with them. He had already made some preparations for such a work, and about 1514 he was appointed editor-in-chief. The dedication was first intended for Warham, then for Leo X, who graciously accepted it, it later was changed back to Warham, when the New Testament was, for important reasons, inscribed to the pope.[2] The first volume came out in 1516, and was promptly followed by the others—nine parts in all, variously bound in four or five tomes. The whole was sold at the reasonable price of nine gulden.[3]

Jerome was but the first of a long series of doctors of the Church to receive editorial attention from the scholar of Rotterdam.[4] At various times he published either the whole or large parts of the works of Algerus, Ambrose, Arnobius, Augustine, Cyprian, Eucherius, Hilarius, Lactantius, and Prudentius, among the Latins. He edited various works of Athanasius, the first, in an old Latin translation, in 1518. Further studies came out in 1527; the dedication of these caused the editor

[1] Erasmus to Maldonato, March 30, 1527. *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, xxix, 1859, p. 608. *Cf.* A. Humbert: *Origines de la théologie moderne*, pp. 228 ff.

[2] Allen, epp. 308, 396, 333–335, 338, 339; Nichols, ep. 384, April 1, 1516. A preface to the reader, Allen, ep. 326.

[3] *Scheurls Briefbuch*, ed. Soden und Knaake, 1872, ii, 13. Scheurl to Spalatin, April 1, 1517. A gulden, fifty-six cents, had a much greater purchasing power than the same amount of gold would have to-day.

[4] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, 1893, série ii.

some thought, before he chose John, Bishop of Lincoln, as the patron.[1] Editions or Latin translations of other Greek fathers, Basil, Irenæus, Chrysostom, Nazianzen, and Origen, appeared in course of time. Erasmus as a critic was at his happiest in the introductions to these authors. While he differentiated and characterized them with unsurpassed nicety, he rendered a genuine literary service to the Church, doing more perhaps to popularize her classical texts than any other man has ever done.

As editor and interpreter of the classics Erasmus was even more active than as a laborer in ecclesiastical fields. No sooner had he mastered Greek than he began to turn his knowledge to account by producing Latin versions of the Attic and Hellenistic masterpieces. A few of these were from Euripides, but most were from that scoffer and atheist of the ancient world, the Syrian Lucian. For ascertainable reasons Lucian was the most popular author of the Renaissance.[2] The Italians Filelfo, Guarino, and Poggio had been among his first admirers and translators. From the time that Rudolph Agricola brought a taste for him north of the Alps, he had more imitators and interpreters than any other Greek writer. Thomas More, Pirckheimer, Mosellanus, Ottomar Luscinius, and Melanchthon all tried their hands at versions of his dialogues.[3] His strong influence was reflected in the numerous satires of the age, in the *Praise of Folly*, and in the works of Rabelais. Indeed, what appealed to the keen wits of the Renaissance was Lucian's satire even more than his skepticism. The Syrian misanthrope took the same delight in mocking the superstitions of paganism that Voltaire found in

[1] L. C. ep. 752. Erasmus to Lewis Ber, January 26, 1527.

[2] J. A. Froude, "Lucian," in *Short Studies in Great Subjects*, iv, 216 ff. R. Förster: "Lucian in der Renaissance," *Archiv für Literaturgeschichte*, xiv, 1886, pp. 337 ff.

[3] In the Leyden Edition of Erasmus's works, LB. ep. 475, is a preface to Lucian's dialogues *Cynicus*, *Necyomantia*, and *Philopseudes*, put in as by Erasmus, though really penned by T. More. See Jortin, *Erasmus*, ii, 746.

ridiculing the Christian mysteries. One of his dialogues represents the poor, impotent, ridiculous deities of Greece attending a debate on the question of their own existence, at Athens, where Damis maintains a skeptical attitude with great success, while his orthodox opponent, Timocles, is totally unable to reply to his arguments save by calling him blasphemer, infidel, and villain. Nor did Christianity escape the notice of Lucian, who directed his jibes against "the man who ascended into heaven," and against Christian dogmas which came to his notice. Indeed, there is extant one dialogue, probably spurious, but perhaps thought by Erasmus to be genuine, directed entirely against the disciples of Jesus, and a translation of this very work under the title *Lucian on Christ*, was circulated over the name of Erasmus.[1] This was probably spurious, but renderings of other works of this skeptical author even such as were less obnoxious to Christian feeling, brought down on the humanist the suspicions of his contemporaries, who murmured that he covered his own opinions under the name of his original and, in the guise of holiness,[2] mocked all things. In this judgment it is impossible for us to concur. Erasmus certainly appreciated and appropriated as his own all the satire of his original in as far as it was directed against human folly and superstition, but it is equally certain that he stopped short of sanctioning actual infidelity. The age was one of restless movement, inquiry, and satire. All old values were being doubted, and the Reformation, which was to transmute many of them, was at hand.

The catholic taste of Erasmus found much to enjoy, and his industry much opportunity, in bringing forth the works of the ancients. Books were the world he lived in. The greatest of all inventions, in his judgment, was

[1] According to a saying of Luther in 1542, Melanchthon had this dialogue, probably in manuscript, as we know nothing else of it. E. Kroker: *Luthers Tischreden in der Mathesischen Sammlung*. No. 569.

[2] So Luther, often, *e.g.*, Wrampelmeyer: *Tagebuch des Conrad Cordatus*, nos. 394, 1294, 1521.

printing, the instrument of learning and true happiness. This discovery he attributed to John Fust, the grandfather of his friend the printer, Peter Schoeffer,[1] though he knew that others disputed it. "This almost divine art," as he called it, was chiefly valuable in his eyes for giving the world the benefit of reading the classics, or, at least, such poor fragments of them as were left. "Let us," he passionately exclaimed, "keep on publishing them, despite those who, under pretext of saving religion, pollute and extinguish all elegant learning, though their frantic efforts in fact only make their victims the more illustrious."

True to his own principles, Erasmus edited many of the classics, among the Latins Ausonius, several works of Cicero, Quintus Curtius, the *Historia Augusta*, Horace, Livy, Ovid, Persius, Plautus, Pliny's *Natural History*, Seneca's tragedies, Suetonius, the *Mimes* of Publius Syrus, and Terence; among the Greeks, either in the original or in Latin versions, Æsop, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Euripides, Galen, Isocrates, Josephus, Libanius, Lucian, Plutarch's minor works, Ptolemy, and Xenophon.[2]

The passion for the Athenian and Roman poets and philosophers displayed in all Erasmus's writings, and the imperial command of them exemplified in the *Adages*, tell the same tale of ardent and unremitting study as is told in his efforts to kindle in others his own enthusiasm. By letters, by assistance of all sorts, and occasionally by gifts, he initiated others into his own tastes. There is in the library of my friend, Mr. George Arthur Plimpton, of New York, a precious volume of Herodotus, published by Aldo in 1502. It has an inscription, in the first owner's hand, "Erasmi sum,"

[1] Allen, ep. 919, preface to edition of Livy gotten out by Hutten, dated February 23, 1519. There is a copy of this work, *T. Livius Patavinus Historicus*, . . . ed. Ulrico de Hutten, Moguntiae, Schoeffer, 1518–19, at Wellesley College, with manuscript notes wrongly attributed to Melanchthon.

[2] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, 1893, série ii. See also, on the translation of Æsop: *Bibliotheca Belgica:* (Æsopus): Fabulae Petri Aegidii, 1513.

to which some admirer has added, "Amicus orbi perenne," "Ever the friend of the world." A further note informs us that Erasmus gave the book to his friend the jurisconsult, Antony Clava, who, at his death on May 31, 1529, left it to Livinus Ammonius. The letter accompanying the gift, dated April 29, 1518, is extant.[1] There is also in existence, in the possession of Mr. P. M. Barnard, of Tunbridge Wells, a copy of Gregory Nazianzen's *Carmina*, published by Aldo at Venice, 1504, with the autograph inscription meaning: "I am Erasmus's, nor do I change my master." When, however, Martin Lipsius received the book as a gift he wrote in it, "I was Erasmus's and I have changed my master," which the original owner capped with a gracious quotation from his own proverb, "Nay, I did not change masters, since a friend is another self."[2]

As the political writings of Erasmus are of considerable importance and originality, it is remarkable that they have hitherto been so little noticed.[3] The most formal, though not the greatest, of them was *The Institution of a Christian Prince*,[4] written for and dedicated to Charles V, then king of Spain and soon to be emperor. This essay is a really valuable contribution to several branches of political science. To be appreciated, the standpoint of the author must be compared with that of his contemporary Machiavelli, whose *Principe*, printed in 1532, was perhaps already written. The Italian statesman regarded politics as totally dissociated from

[1] Allen, ep. 841. Mr. Plimpton bought the book, which I have seen, from J. E. Hodgkin, or from his estate. See *Historical MSS. Commission*, 15th report, 1897, Appendix, part ii, p. 4.

[2] Letter by Prof. J. W. Thompson, in the New York *Nation*, May 17, 1919, p. 792; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, 1917–19, p. 61. Various allusions to the book occur in Erasmus's correspondence with Lipsius.

[3] W. A. Dunning: *A History of Political Theories*, 3 vols. 1902 ff, has no word on Erasmus.

[4] Text, LB. iv, 561 ff; preface Allen, ep. 393; Nichols, ep. 389. See L. Enthoven: "Ueber die Institutio Principis Christiani des Erasmus," *Neue Jahrbücher für das Klassische Altertum, etc.*, xxiv, 312 ff. Extracts from the *Institutio* have just been published by the Grotius Society, as no. 1 of a series of texts for students of international relations.

morals, as much so as mathematics; it was a game like chess or war in which any strategy or ruse was allowable. Erasmus followed Aristotle, Plato and Aquinas in making politics a branch of ethics, both being concerned with the actions of men, the one in a public, the other in a private capacity.

What were Erasmus's sources besides the Greeks just mentioned, and the obvious one of the *Utopia*, I am unable to say. There were a large number of political writings in the Middle Ages, many of them, like the works of Occam, being concerned chiefly with the proper relation of Church and state, and others, like Dante's *Monarchia*, with proving that one particular form of government is the best. Erasmus does not concern himself with either of these questions and there is no proof that he ever studied politics thoroughly. His essay was above all practical, and it is perhaps superfluous to look for sources beyond the commonplaces of the schools and his own observation of the needs of his country.

After recommendations as to the qualifications desirable in elective rulers he points out the necessity of education for any ruler, and especially for a hereditary prince. The object of this education should be to teach him that his main duty is not to fight the Turks or found monasteries, but to care for his people. The second chapter is a warning against flatterers, though Erasmus himself is, as usual, quite liberal with his praise. The third chapter is on the arts of peace. The first of these is to love his people; but to do so in an enlightened manner, not buying popularity with largesses, but caring for the public interests by the skillful appointment of counsellors and by attending to larger concerns in person, for nothing is more regrettable than the absence of the prince. Among the arts of peace Erasmus naturally gives a high place to the foundation and support of schools and universities.

Chapter four is an excellent treatment of the subject

of taxation. Imposts should be as light as possible, and should be levied solely on luxuries, leaving free necessities like grain, bread, beer, wine, and clothing, but bearing heavily on linens, silks, purple, unguents, and gems. The author follows up this economic discussion by a brief consideration of the proper beneficences of a prince, his duty as legislator, as appointer of officers, as a framer of treaties and alliances, and as a fostering patron of peaceful industry. The last chapter is a sermon on the favorite subject of the wickedness of war, which should never be undertaken against a Christian power nor rashly even against the Turks. He proposes that if dissentions arise the contending parties resort to arbitration instead of arms. "There are many bishops, abbots, learned men, and grave magistrates by whose judgment these things might be far more decently composed than by murder, pillage, and calamity throughout the world." For this suggestion of international arbitration, first realized in the nineteenth century, Erasmus had a predecessor in Pierre Dubois (1300) one of the lawyers of Philip le Bel.[1] But as he had probably never read this lawyer's book the similarity of their suggestion should not betray us into imagining a connection between the two distinct expressions of the same idea.

Pacifism was one of the most valuable, as it was one of the most modern, features of Erasmus's thought. In season and out of season he was always urging the folly and the wickedness of international, wholesale homicide. "In my opinion," he wrote, "Cicero was right in saying that an unjust peace was better than the justest war."[2] And again, "I do not condemn every war, for some are necessary, nor do I taunt any prince, yet it cannot be denied that when war breaks out there is a crime on

[1] *Cf.* E. H. Meyer: *Die Staats— und Völkerrechtlichen Ideen von P. Dubois.* 1908.

[2] To Peutinger, L. C. i, 391; Allen, ep. 1156. Very early he expressed the same opinion, Allen, ep. 29.

one side or the other, if not on both."[1] Even war on the Turks, he urged in a special treatise, did not please him and could only be justified on the plea of necessity.[2] To give his ideas general expression he published, at the request of the Burgundian Secretary of State, John Le Sauvage, for the conference about to take place at Cambrai in March, 1517, a tract entitled *The Complaint of Peace*.[3] Chiefly on religious grounds, but also for reasons of ordinary morality and of expediency, he urged the case against war. Again he brought forward his plan for arbitration, arguing that even an unjust award, now and then, would be less injurious to the aggrieved party than the havoc of armed conflict. But these suggestions were too far ahead of the time to bear immediate fruit. Only in our time have statesmen come to appreciate the old humanist's contribution to the cause of peace.[4]

Next to pacifism, republicanism is the most original and valuable element of Erasmus's political thought. One must not be misled by the adulation he now and then heaped on royal patrons into thinking that he fell in with the general tendency of the Renaissance and Reformation to exalt monarchy as instituted *jure divino*. A close study of his writings will show that he differed from Machiavelli not only in his ideal of a prince, but in his ideal of government. Nothing is more untenable than the opinion, recently advanced,[5] that fundamentally both the Florentine and the Rotterdamer maintained the same thesis, the one as a statesman, the other as a man of letters, and that "both forgot only one thing, the governed." Erasmus saw the miseries of the people and the folly of their hereditary rulers more plainly than any man of his time. He often was reminded, he wrote

[1] To Christopher von Schydlowitz, August 27, 1528. Horawitz: *Erasmiana i*, (*Sitzungsberichte. . . . Wien*, vol. 90), p. 438.

[2] *De Bello Turcico*, LB. v, 365.

[3] *Querela Pacis*, prefatory letter to Philip of Burgundy, Allen, ep. 603. English translation, *The Complaint of Peace*, published by Open Court, 1917.

[4] J. Bryce: *International Relations*, 1922, p. 18.

[5] Imbart de la Tour: *Origines de la Réforme*, i, 556 ff.

Budé in prudent Greek, of the Horatian verse, "When the kings go mad the people are smitten."[1] In his *Adages*, especially in the edition of 1515, a bitter hatred of monarchy is expressed, such as is hardly found elsewhere save in the French monarchomachs of St. Bartholomew and of the Revolution. Listen to this:[2]

> The eagle is the image of a king, for he is neither beautiful, nor musical, nor fit for food, but he is carnivorous, rapacious, a brigand, a destroyer, solitary, hated by all, a pest to all, who, though he can do more harm than anyone, wishes to do more harm than he can.

Or this:[3]

> In all history, ancient and modern, scarcely in several centuries are found one or two princes whose signal folly did not inflict ruin on mankind. . . . I know not whether much of the blame of this should not be imputed to ourselves. We trust the rudder of a vessel, where a few sailors and some goods alone are in jeopardy, to none but skillful pilots; but the state, wherein the safety of so many thousands is bound up, is put into any chance hands. A charioteer must learn, study, and practice his art; a prince needs only to be born. Yet government, as it is the most honorable, so it is the most difficult, of sciences. Shall we choose the master of a ship and not choose him who is to have the care of so many cities and so many lives? But our custom is too long established to be subverted. Do we not see that noble cities are erected by the people and destroyed by princes? that a state grows rich by the industry of its citizens and is plundered by the rapacity of its rulers? that good laws are enacted by representatives of the people and violated by kings? that the commons love peace and the monarchs foment war?
>
> The guardians of a prince aim never to let him become a man. The nobility, battening on public corruption, endeavor to make him as effeminate as possible by pleasure lest he should know what a prince ought to know. Villages are burnt, fields are devastated, temples pillaged, innocent citizens slaughtered, all things spiritual and temporal are confounded, while the king plays dice or dances, or amuses himself with fools, or with hunting or drinking.

Such passages might be multiplied.[4] The author of these sentiments might have led a republican revolt,

[1] Allen, ep. 954. "Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi."
[2] *Adagia*, "Scarabæus aquilam quærit," LB. ii, 875.
[3] *Adagia*, "Aut regem aut fatuum nasci oportet," LB. ii, 106.
[4] *Cf.* "Frons occipitio prior," *Adagia*, LB. ii, 77.

had the times been ripe and his own character as decided in action as it was bold in speculation. However, while he saw plainly what was rotten in monarchy, he could hardly frame in his own mind a practical alternative. The Peasants' War was a great shock to him, as it was to Luther and to other liberals. In the *Adage* "Scarabæus"[1] after one of the fiercest invectives against the monarch who "makes the whole people tremble, the senate subservient, the nobility obedient, the judges obsequious, the theologians silent," as he beats down laws and customs, humanity and justice, Erasmus adds:

> But princes must be endured, lest tyranny give way to anarchy, a still greater evil. This has been demonstrated by the experience of many states; and lately the insurrection of the German peasants has taught us that the cruelty of kings is better than the universal confusion of anarchy.

Indeed, Erasmus had no very high opinion of the masses, "that fickle, many-headed monster," as he once called the people.[2] Early in life he wrote: "If a thing displease the vulgar, that is a presumption in its favor," and, "truth is a sharp and bitter thing to the vulgar."[3] Nevertheless, his incisive criticism of hereditary magistrates bore fruit, in the various fields in which the seed fell, in some thirtyfold, in some fiftyfold, in some a hundredfold. While Grotius blamed his pacifism,[4] Sir Thomas Elyot, in his book, *The Governour*, wrote, "There was never boke written in latine that in so lytle a portion contained of sentence, eloquence, & vertuous exhortation a more compendious abundance," than the *Institution of a Christian Prince*.[5] Catharine de' Medici had a French paraphrase of it made for the instruction of her sons; and the author cannot be blamed if these boys

[1] LB. ii, 871 ff. The passage about the Peasants' Revolt was, of course, added after 1525.
[2] LB. ep. 655. To Albert of Mainz, June 1, 1523.
[3] Allen, ep. 63.
[4] H. Grotius: *Warre and Peace*, English translation, London, 1655, Preface, unnumbered page.
[5] T. Elyot: *The Governour*, 1880 (after first edition of 1531), i, 95.

grew up into weaklings and degenerates.[1] The two antimonarchical adages, "Scarabæus" and "The king and the fool are born such," were separately printed and widely circulated. Luther's friend, Spalatin, translated the latter into German, adding a dedicatory epistle to Prince Joachim of Anhalt,[2] and Luther's own famous remark,[3] that "since the foundation of the world a wise prince has been a rare bird and a just one much rarer, for they have usually been the biggest fools and worst knaves on earth," is but an echo of Erasmus. The truest heirs of the liberal humanist, however, were the French monarchomachs, who in the Wars of Religion almost anticipated the Revolution by two centuries. Many a page of Mornay and of Beza and of Hotman and, above all, of La Boétie, bears the stamp of the writers' careful study, during the impressionable period of youth, of the two adages just quoted.[4]

Familiar letters were then, as they have been at many periods and as they are now, one of the recognized, most carefully cultivated, and most popular forms of literature. The epistle is at once a necessity, a comfort, and a luxury. It is a key to unlock the heart and to open a treasury of gentle wisdom, of homely sentiment, of keen observation, and of criticism of life. As a literary form it furnishes infinite variety, patient of all manners save the stilted or formal. As a historical source it combines the advantages of the document written at the same time as the events described, and of the memoir revealing the writer's psychology as he serves up the facts known to him. Even the simplest missives of business, friendship, and love, written by common men and women, such as those recently turned up by the hundred in the Egyp-

[1] Chantilly: *Cabinet des Livres*, 1900, i, 255. The MS. is entitled "Epitomé ou Sommaire du traité d'Érasme de Roterdam, de l'Institution d'ung Prince Chrestien jusques en l'eage d'adolescence." It was made in the years 1553-4.

[2] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, "Adagia."

[3] *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, xi, 267 f, 1523.

[4] Preserved Smith: *The Age of the Reformation*, 1920, pp. 588 ff.

tian papyri, are fascinating. The polished epistles of Cicero and of the younger Pliny, the sacred epistles of St. Paul and of St. Jerome, furnished models for the humanists who, especially in Italy, cultivated no style of composition more assiduously than the epistolary. The teaching of Latin prose always included the writing of letters, as well as of orations. So popular was this literary form that it furnished a mold for the satire of the *Obscure Men* and for the history of Peter Martyr d'Anghierra.

As the *Opus Epistolarum*, the bulkiest of all Erasmus's extant works, shows, he was second to none in practicing the art of letter-writing and in keeping his correspondence for publication. Indeed, one of his earliest studies, written for an English pupil about 1498, first pirated, then published by the author himself in 1521, was a treatise on letter-writing.[1] "I judge that epistle to be the best," he says, "which is furthest from the vulgar, unlearned sort; which conveys choice sentiments in elegant, apt words, and which is well suited in style to the argument, the place, the time, and the person addressed." The author adds several engaging examples of the best style of letter writing, partly from Pliny and Cicero, partly of his own composition, these latter including an amatory epistle to a girl, and several letters selected from his authentic correspondence.

His friends valued his epistles highly enough to keep them, and some of them even found their way, in manuscript copies, into the bookshops. A whole code of his letters was bought by his friend Piso at a bookstall in Siena, and other such collections came back to the writer at different times.[2] Although he burned these, he himself preserved what he thought worth keeping, even some from his earliest years, and, after careful editorial revision, in order, as he expressed it, to remove the aloes of bitterness, he adopted the plan, not uncommon among

[1] *De conscribendis epistolis*, LB. i, 343 ff, Allen, ep. 71; *Bibliotheca Erasmiana.*
[2] Allen, ep. 1206.

Italian humanists, of publishing his own correspondence during his lifetime. The volumes enjoyed considerable popularity among his contemporaries, both for their personal and for their literary interest, and they are to us of to-day perhaps the best part of the humanist's work.[1] A certain number of his important letters were brought out separately, as articles now are printed in periodicals. The first group to be published were the four of May, 1515, to Leo, to the Cardinals Grimani and Riario, and to Dorp in defense of the *Moria*. These came out in *Damiani Elegia*, Froben, August, 1515. In the following year, while staying at Antwerp with his intimate friend, Gilles, Erasmus had twenty-one letters printed, three of the previous four and eighteen others to and from famous men—Leo X, Warham, Ammonius, Henry VIII, More, Colet, Budé, and others. This collection was edited with a preface written by Gilles, who, according to the convention of the day, assumed the responsibility of bringing out the letters of his modest friend.

A third selection, also fathered by Gilles, appeared in March, 1517, under the title of *Epistolæ elegantes*. It included thirty-five letters, some of the previous ones and others from Leo, the Bishop of Worcester, Budé, and other scholars.

Sixty-three new letters were edited by Beatus Rhenanus under the title of *Auctarium*, in August, 1518. Erasmus pretended to be ignorant of this publication but he really had been preparing for it. To Mountjoy, for example, he wrote[2] requesting him to send some letters for insertion in it and promising to change anything in them that ought to be changed and to publish nothing indiscreet. Several of the letters are apologies.

The *Farrago* (October, 1519) contained a much larger number of letters (333), including almost all prior to the year 1514 that were published during Erasmus' life-

[1] For the different editions published, *cf.* Allen, i, 593 ff; Nichols, i, pp. xxvi ff. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana* (1893), Pt. 1, pp. 87 ff.

[2] Allen, ep. 783, c. March 5, 1518.

time. The correspondence is quite one-sided, only a few letters from such famous men as More and Colet being included. The responsibility for this may rest partly upon the Basle editors, who were modest enough not to include a single letter from their own circle.

The next edition, *Epistolæ ad diversos*, was brought out in the latter part of 1521 (the preface is dated May 27th, but letters as late as November 22d are included) to correct some indiscretions committed in the preceding volumes, for Erasmus was now getting deeper than he wished into the Lutheran affair. As far as possible he suppressed the earlier letters in which he had expressed sympathy with the Reformer. Most of these are probably now entirely lost, but some of them have since been found and edited. To counteract their effect he now put in a large quantity of hedging utterances, professing his total aloofness from Wittenberg. His preface is so characteristic of his attitude, especially toward his own correspondence, that a part of it may well be translated:[1]

I see, my good Beatus, that what you write is more true than I should wish. But then I wonder why my German friends insist so strongly upon that which brings down upon me such a burden of ill will. For you know how unhappy was the issue of those epistles of which you first undertook the editing, and still more unfortunate that *Farrago*. . . . Even in that careful selection enough was found to excite tragic anger in many hearts. I have therefore made up my mind to desist entirely from that kind of writing, especially now that affairs are everywhere rocked by such a marvelous agitation, and the minds of many so embittered by hatred that you cannot write anything so mildly, so simply, or so circumspectly that they will not seize it for purposes of calumny.

Though as a young man, and also at a riper age, I have written a great number of letters, I scarcely wrote any with a view to publication. I practiced my style, I beguiled my leisure, I made merry with my acquaintance, I indulged my humor, in fine did scarcely anything in this way but amuse myself, expecting nothing less than that my friend would copy and preserve such trifling compositions. . . . But if epistles lack true feeling and do not represent the life of the writer, they do not deserve the name of epistles.

[1] Nichols, i, p. lxxvii ff. Allen, ep. 1206.

Apparently the *Epistolæ ad diversos* did not have the expected effect, for Erasmus allowed seven years to pass before he again ventured to print some more of his correspondence; and when at last he did so the tiny volume of *Selectæ Epistolæ* (1528) consisted of apologies. The next year, however, Froben persuaded his learned friend to undertake a new edition of correspondence, and this resulted in the large *Opus Epistolarum* (1529) containing more than a thousand letters, of which more than four hundred were new. After this, supplements appeared frequently, the *Epistolæ Floridæ* in 1531, the *Epistolæ palæonæoi* in 1532. Sixteen new letters appeared as an appendix to his *De præparatione ad mortem* (1534), and nineteen new letters in the volume containing his *De puritate tabernaculi* (c. February, 1536).

Nowadays, distinguished people leave the publication of their private correspondence to their literary executors and biographers. The artifices taken to avoid the appearance of egotism have become too trite and too transparent for further use. Indeed, in the sixteenth century, Montaigne animadverted severely on Cicero and Pliny for publishing their familiar epistles, adding, "What could a silly schoolmaster, who gets his living by such trash, do worse?"[1] A close parallel to the humanist's practice is furnished by Alexander Pope, who, though with greater secrecy and more elaborate pretense that it was all done by friends, edited his own letters, altering a great deal, especially the names of correspondents and dates.[2]

Regarding his epistles as literature, Erasmus felt free to rewrite them, as much as wished, for publication. When Eoban Hess printed some of Erasmus's letters, the humanist wrote his young friend that he regretted the act, for he was about to edit the letters himself in a fuller form.[3] Comparison with the manuscripts, where

[1] Montaigne: *Essais*, i, 39.
[2] G. Paston: *Mr. Pope*, 1910. 2 vols.
[3] Allen, ep. 982.

they have survived, shows extensive and important alterations.[1] Dates, added from memory, were frequently wrong, or were sometimes falsified intentionally to give a desired impression.[2] Names were suppressed; whole passages were omitted, and others added, Justus Jonas remarked with astonishment that one of the humanist's letters to himself had been greatly expanded on publication, and corrupted by the introduction of an incorrect statement.[3] Erasmus frequently assured his friends that he would print nothing unfit for the public eye.[4] He preferred the artistic grouping of letters by subject and writer, and shrank from the more exposing chronological order which friends sometimes urged on him, and which he once promised to adopt.[5]

These facts make one cautious in using the letters as historical sources, but they do not destroy, or even seriously impair, their value. Some facts would be too notorious for Erasmus to suppress; most others he would have no motive for concealing. Moreover, he could never really misrepresent himself. If a letter written by him was published ten years afterward, we may not be sure of the exact date at which he held the opinions expressed in it—but we are certain that he held them, or at least wrote them. That he altered here and there to protect his friends and himself was inevitable and morally unobjectionable. Since his death some letters have been found dealing with the shame of his birth and the errors

[1] Examples of changes, Nichols, vol. iii, pp. 116 f, 288, 216, 295. *Cf.* Nichols, i, p. xx, p. xxix; pp. 406, 408, ep. 464. Nichols reads "nusquam adorno" and translates, "I do not embellish anywhere," applying this to the editing of the epistles. But the true reading is "Nusquamam adorno," "I am preparing the *Utopia*." Allen, ep. 477.

[2] An example of this in the first letters he ever printed, in *Damiani Elegia*, Allen, epp. 333–335. Allen says that more than half the dates added by Erasmus from memory were wrong, i, 596.

[3] G. Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas*, 1884 f, i, p. 42. The epistle in question was published in the *Farrago nova*, and is now found in Allen, ep. 985.

[4] Allen, ep. 783.

[5] Förstemann-Günther, nos. 61, 73.

of his youth. How could he be expected to expose these to the public gaze? The greater part of his changes are purely stylistic, not material. Only in one respect has he seriously beclouded the clear sky of historical truth, and in this respect he has himself alone suffered. The reputation he has borne for extreme caution, carried to the verge of cowardice, is based on the impression given by the letters published by himself and carefully toned down, as was absolutely necessary in the circumstances, when they were published. He really played a momentous and a not cowardly part in the great religious conflict of his age, but he has given the world the idea, through the carefully guarded manner in which he explained his private acts to the public, that he played a small, almost a pusillanimous, rôle.[1] Making due allowance for this, as should be done, though it hardly ever has been done, we shall find him a greater and truer man in his nakedness than he appeared in his own too carefully selected dress.

For the lover of history and of good literature Erasmus's epistles are a feast. He serves up all his own sweet and reasonable ideas, many a lively anecdote, and not a few exquisite portraits, with the sauce of gentle humor and the warmth of a facile, charming, if not classical, Latin. And what a society one meets at his hospitable board! Popes and monarchs, nobles and bankers, reformers, scholars, artists, writers, Luther, Melanchthon Margaret of Navarre, Colet, More, Budé, Zwingli, Œcolampadius, Aleander, Rabelais! But to name them all would be to call the roll of half the great men of the early sixteenth century.

[1] *Cf.* P. Kalkoff: *Gegenreformation in den Niederlanden*, 1903, i, 4.

CHAPTER IX

THE REFORMATION. THE FIRST PHASE, 1517-21

"ERASMUS laid the eggs and Luther hatched the chickens." "Erasmus is the father of Luther." "Luther, Zwingli, Œcolampadius, and Erasmus are the soldiers of Pilate, who crucify Christ." These gems of the epigrammatic style are among those that once studded the sermons of a Catholic priest who wished by them to express vividly his conviction that Erasmus started the Reformation. It is true that Erasmus denied that the priest had either learning or eloquence, or fairness, or genius, or piety,[1] and as to the first saying he protested, "I laid a hen's egg; Luther hatched a bird of quite a different breed."[2] Nevertheless, the pithy phrase flew all over Europe, attained almost the currency of a proverb, and but expressed, with true wit, what many people thought. Aleander asserted that Luther and Erasmus taught the same things, save that the poison of the latter was more deadly.[3]

On the Protestant side the same assertion was often made. "We all know," wrote Conrad Mutian in the early days of his enthusiasm for the Reform to his friend John Lang, "that we must congratulate theology on being restored by Erasmus, from whom, as from a fountain, are derived Œcolampadii, Melanchthons, Luthers, and, oh! how many princes of literature!"[4]

Luther saw clearly the connection of Renaissance and

[1] Erasmus to Sinapius, July 31, 1534. Stähelin: *Briefe aus der Reformationszeit*, 1887, no. 24.

[2] LB. iii, 840.

[3] *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Karl V*, ii, 523 f.

[4] Mutian to Lang, May 24, 1520. Krause: *Epistolæ aliquot selectæ. Osterprogramm des Zerbster Gymnasiums*, 1883, 15.

Reformation, saying: "There has never been a great revelation of the Word of God unless he has first prepared the way by the rise and prosperity of languages and letters, as though they were John the Baptists."[1] Erasmus, he stated, had called the world from godless studies to a knowledge of the sacred tongues, though, like Moses, he could not himself enter into the promised land.[2] Zwingli, Melanchthon, and the minor Reformers were also forward to acknowledge their debts to the humanist. In fact, if the matter were to be decided by the suffrage of leading contemporaries, the man would certainly be considered, as he has recently been dubbed, "a hero of the Reformation." But he himself would have declined the title; in fact, he spent the last fifteen years of his life energetically protesting that he had nothing to do with the Protestant revolt. If he really labored in the vineyard, he was like the son in the parable who did so, but who said, "I go not."

The truth of the matter is somewhat complicated. On one side, the purely intellectual, the Reformation inherited the wealth of the Christian Renaissance in general, and of the Dutch humanist in particular. The program demanding a wider cultivation of letters, a return to the Bible and early sources, the suppression of abuses and of mediæval accretions on the primitive Church, the reform of the Church, and the substitution of an inner, individual piety for a mechanical, external scheme of salvation, was first advanced by the humanists and was afterward largely realized by the Reformers. But the Reformation was the child of more than one ancestor; it took over and accomplished the programs of several other movements, which lay outside the Renaissance, and were in part hostile to it. On one side it represented the growth of nationalism and the foundation of state churches, already foreshadowed by the English statutes of Mortmain, Provisors, and Præmunire, and by the

[1] Luther to Eoban Hess, March 29, 1523. L. C. ep. 580.
[2] Luther to Œcolampadius, June 20, 1523. L. C. ep. 591.

Gallican liberties. With this aspiration cosmopolitan culture had no part nor lot. Again, Luther and Calvin appealed chiefly to the newly powerful bourgeois classes, whereas the humanists cared naught for any social question. A vein of mysticism came down from Tauler and *The German Theology* to Luther; but Erasmus, though he was directly exposed to the influence of Thomas à Kempis and of the Dutch mystics, and though he owed something to them, was too much of a rationalist to know the ardors of the mystic life. Finally, the Reformation was the direct heir of the mediæval heretics, especially of Wyclif and Huss. But Erasmus neither knew them nor would have approved their schism. Though he was aware that Colet was a student of Wyclif, he himself never read the English Reformer, and to the Lollards his only reference is the jocose remark that he pitied those who were burned in 1511 less because the demand for fagots sent up the price of firewood.[1] In truth, heresy always seemed to him a bit freakish, something repugnant to the sane and sound common sense of mankind. When the Bohemian Brother, John Slechta, of Kosteletz, wrote him of the three churches in Bohemia,[2] Erasmus replied that he wished they were all one, and that eccentricity was no presumption of truth. No doctrine has been so silly, said he, that it has not found followers:

> There were men who taught that it was pious for sons to kill an aged parent, and a nation has been found where this is solemnly done. . . . There were some who recognized a debt to Judas the traitor for the redemption of the world, nor were disciples lacking who worshiped him as a great saint. . . . I believe that if leaders arose teaching that it is religious for naked men to dance with naked women in the market place they would get disciples for their sect.

[1] Allen, epp. 239, 240. These jocose letters may have been the source of the assertion made by Pierre Bayle (1697) that burning heretics under Queen Mary raised the price of firewood in England. See Addison's *Spectator*, no. 139, December 4, 1711.

[2] Allen, epp. 1021, 1039. October 10 and November 1, 1519. Also published in Bohuslaw's correspondence: *Dva Listáre Humanistické* . . . ed. J. Truhlar, Prag, 1897, ep. 28.

But, however much Erasmus despised the vagaries of religious enthusiasm, he was desirous of reform. When Luther began attacking flagrant abuses, Erasmus knew that he had a case, and a good one. For nearly four years he labored hard and at no little risk to get him a fair hearing. Later he was repelled, not so much by the danger to himself—though that was not slight—as by the dogmatic violence of the Evangelical leaders. Disliking dogma, he could not find it any more palatable hot from Wittenberg than cold in Rome. Fearing the "tumult" above all things, bitterly hating the mob-violence and partisan conflict in which reason can but abdicate, he became more and more alien to the cause he had once regarded with open-mindedness, if not with cordial approval. Even from the first he had misgivings, lest the stir and bustle of it all should end in a tragedy. Indeed, it is possible that he foresaw the revolt before it took place. The signs of the time were so plain that Aleander[1] warned the pope in 1516 that Germany was on the point of secession. "In this part of the world," wrote Erasmus, on September 9, 1517, "I fear that a great revolution is about to take place."[2]

Though Erasmus could not have been one of the formative influences of Luther's early life, his writings were, from 1515 or 1516 until about 1521, the chief guide and authority of the Wittenberg professor. After 1521, the humanist was indeed read carefully, but generally with dissent and reprobation. But in the earlier period, so perfectly did the Austin friar imbibe the doctrine of the Austin canon that on April 27, 1518, at the Heidelberg disputation, Bucer reported that the young Reformer agreed in all things with Erasmus, save

[1] P. Balan: *Monumenta Reformationis*, 1884, no. 31; Th. Brieger: *Aleander und Luther*, 1884, no. 11.

[2] Allen, ep. 658; Nichols, ep. 628. It is not certain, but it is quite possible that Erasmus had in mind an impending religious revolution. He may have referred to the disorders in Holland, such as the atrocities of the Black Band; but it is as likely that he had an uneasy presentiment of religious change.

that he expressed them more openly.[1] The *Adagia* was one of the first works of its author to be thoroughly read by the Wittenberger, and was one which he took care always to have in the latest and best edition.[2] There may be a quotation from it in Luther's works as early as 1510-11;[3] quotations from it become very numerous after May, 1518.[4] The *Enchiridion* suggested the campaign at Wittenberg against the worship of the saints, and the difference between inner and outer religion, worked up in the treatise *On Christian Liberty*. The *Folly* was also read, as was the satire known as the *Julius Excluded from Heaven*.

Luther purchased and eagerly devoured the large collections of the humanist's letters published from time to time. He perused the *Auctarium selectarum epistolarum*[5] (August, 1518) containing sixty-three letters mostly of the years 1517-18; the *Farrago nova*[6] (1519) with 333 epistles well distributed over many years; the *Epistolæ ad diversos*[7] (September 1, 1521) containing many recent but cautiously selected letters. These volumes were chiefly interesting to him as revealing the writer's attitude toward the Evangelic cause and its leader, and he praised or blamed them accordingly. In subsequent years he expressed the harsh judgment that nothing was to be found in the epistles but laudation of friends and reviling of enemies.[8]

One of these letters, that to Antony of Bergen, dated March 14, 1514, on the subject of peace, was translated

[1] L. C. ep. 57.

[2] *Luther's Briefwechsel*, bearbeitet von E. L. Enders, i, 157. February, 1518.

[3] Luther's notes on Lombard's *Sentences*, *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, ix, 65, quotes the proverb "sus Minervam," which may have been taken from Æsop, but more probably from Erasmus.

[4] Enders, i, 192 (twice), 193 (twice), 207 (twice), 214, 351, 404, 408 (twice), 489; ii, 48, 122 (twice), 131, 193. There are probably others I have not noticed.

[5] De Wette: *Luthers Briefe* (1825-56), i, 362. *Cf.* Enders, ii, 216.

[6] Enders, ii, 369. L. C. i, 310.

[7] Enders, iii, 360, 361.

[8] *Tischreden*, ed. Forstemann und Bindseil, iii, 423.

by Spalatin, Luther's best friend, apparently from a manuscript copy.[1] Spalatin, indeed, the chaplain of the Elector Frederic, was a tremendous admirer of the humanist, other works of whom he thought of translating; and all of those publications, as fast as they came out, he induced his master to buy and put in the library at Wittenberg, where Luther and the other professors had easy access to them.[2]

Most of all was Luther influenced by the publication of the Greek New Testament, which from the moment he got it, in April, 1516, became his chief guide and authority in exegesis for some years. But the Wittenberg professor was not the man to follow any authority blindly. The sharp critic of the Bible did not let its modern editor go unscathed. He was especially displeased by the treatment of the Epistle to the Romans, for, having recently worked out his own famous doctrine of justification by faith, resting on Romans i:17, he was disappointed to see that Erasmus had so little to say about it. So much disturbed was he by this omission, that within a few months after he had obtained the New Testament, he wrote to his influential friend Spalatin, pointing out the fault and begging him to communicate it to Erasmus.[3] "In interpreting the apostle on justifi-

[1] Allen, ep. 266, i, 551. Allen puts Spalatin's translation in 1514. This would postulate an extremely brisk circulation of the letter. Spalatin's letter to Luther, Enders, i, 74, L. C. ep. 23, on the advisability of translating certain little works, points to 1516 as the more probable date. The evidence that Luther knew the translation is in a letter to Spalatin, Enders, i, 333 (1519), where he says, "Erasmus is for peace as you know better than I do."

[2] Allen, ii, 417. A list of the books bought for this library in the year 1512 includes *Erasmi opera* (meaning the *Lucubratiunculæ*, *cf. Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, i, 119), Valla's *Elegantiæ*, the *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum*, and the *Encomium Moriæ*. *Archiv für Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels*, xviii, 1896.

[3] Enders, i, 63-64. October 19, 1516, L. C. ep. 21. For another criticism, of February, 1519, *ibid.*, i, 439. It is a little hard to find the exact point of Luther's criticism, which seems somewhat fine spun to modern minds. Turning to Erasmus's note on Romans i:17 (the division into verses is later, but I refer to the passage, "The just shall live by his faith"), found in the *Annotationes* (1519), pp. 251 ff, we see that Erasmus, instead of following Jerome, expressly repudiates him. Jerome would have read, both here and in Habakkuk (ii:4),

cation by works, or by the law, or justification proper (as the apostle calls it), he understands only the ceremonial and figurative observance of the law. Moreover he will not hear the apostle on original sin, though he allows that there is such a thing." The writer concludes that no good works justify, even if they be the heroic deeds of a Fabricius or of a Regulus. In accordance with his friend's desire, Spalatin communicated this criticism to Erasmus, quoting it word for word, but mentioning the critic only as "an Augustinian priest no less famous for the sanctity of his life than for his theological lore." The humanist received this letter, but did not answer it.[1]

Another severe criticism, probably directed against the notes on the New Testament, is the following in a letter of March 1, 1517.[2]

> I read our Erasmus and my respect for him daily decreases. He pleases me because, constantly and learnedly, he convicts and condemns monks and priests of inveterate sloth and ignorance; yet I fear he does not sufficiently reveal Christ and the grace of God, in which he is much more ignorant than Lefèvre d'Étaples, for human considerations prevail with him much more than divine.

While Erasmus paid no attention to Spalatin's letter on biblical theology, he could not long ignore the *Ninety-five Theses* on indulgences, posted on the doors of the Castle Church at Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. Even before they were nailed up they had been printed, and they flew through Germany "as if carried by angels." Four months after their promulgation they were sent by Erasmus to his friends More and Colet.[3] To the latter he wrote:

> In all royal courts counterfeit theologians rule. The Roman Curia has simply cast aside all shame. What is more impudent than these incessant indulgences? Now a war with the Turks is the pretext for them, though the real object is to drive the Spaniards from Naples.

"The just shall live by my faith"; Erasmus defends the traditional reading, "by his faith." Luther had arrived at his interpretation about June, 1515.

[1] Spalatin to Erasmus, Allen, ep. 501. He wrote again, complaining that he had received no answer, November 13, 1517. Ep. 711. *Cf.* Allen, ii, p. 415.

[2] L. C. ep. 30. A similar opinion, January 18, 1518.

[3] Allen, epp. 785, 786, March 5, 1518.

Unfortunately, Colet's answer has not been preserved, but there is some reason to think that he approved of the *Theses*.[1]

Two months later, when Erasmus passed through Strassburg on his way from Louvain to Basle, he saw Fabritius Capito, who had already been in correspondence with him and with Luther,[2] and to this common friend the humanist expressed a candid admiration for the *Theses*, which Capito hastened to communicate to Wittenberg.[3]

No one could remain long unconscious of the turmoil excited by the first act of the Reformation. Erasmus's opinion of the *Theses*, and his endeavor to pour oil on the troubled waters, is reflected in the preface to the new edition of his *Enchiridion*, in the form of a letter to Paul Volz, dated August 14, 1518.[4]

If anyone assails the absurd opinions of the common people who call those virtues prime which are the very least, and who detest among vices those which are most trivial even at their worst, and conversely, he is at once called into court as though he favored those vices which he called less evil than others, and as if he condemned virtues which he said were less holy than some others. So, if anyone admonishes us that deeds of charity are better than papal indulgences, he does not altogether condemn indulgences, but he prefers to them what is more surely taught by Christ. Likewise, if anyone warns us that it is better for a man to care for wife and children at home than to make pilgrimages to Rome, Jerusalem, or Compostella, and better to give the money wasted on these long and perilous journeys to good and true poor men, he does not condemn the pious intention, but prefers to it that which is more truly pious.

[1] In his letter to Luther, May 30, 1519, L. C. ep. 155, Erasmus says that he has favorers in England, and those among the greatest. As he could hardly have referred to More, or Wolsey, or Tunstall, or Fisher, who was left, among Erasmus's friends, save Colet?

[2] Enders, ep. 63 February 19, 1518; Allen, ep. 459, September 2, 1516.

[3] The letter in which Capito told Luther of Erasmus's judgment is lost, but a summary of it is given in a letter of September 4, 1518. Enders, ep. 92. L. C. ep. 78. Capito was at this time resident at Basle, connected with the university and cathedral, but he was making a visit to Strassburg to push his suit for the provostship of St. Thomas's Church, which suit he won.

[4] Allen, ep. 858. Erasmus later denied that he had the *Theses* in mind, but it is difficult to believe this when one compares the passage here translated with *Theses 43–46*. *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, i, 235.

Erasmus was further informed of the course of events by a letter from Luther's good friend, John Lang, of Erfurt, a letter brought by Eoban Hess when he visited Louvain in October, 1518. To Lang the humanist replied on October 17, 1518:[1]

I hear that Eleutherius is approved by all good men, but it is said that his writings are unequal. I think his *Theses* will please all, except a few about Purgatory, which they who make their living from it don't want taken from them. I have seen Prierias's bungling answer.[2] I see that the monarchy of the Roman high priest (as that see now is) is the plague of Christendom, though it is praised through thick and thin by shameless preachers. Yet I hardly know whether it is expedient to touch this open sore, for that is the duty of princes. But I fear they conspire with the pontiff for part of the spoils. I wonder what has come over Eck to begin a battle with Eleutherius.[3]

Two days after penning the above Erasmus wrote to Capito: "Some one has informed me that Martin Luther is in danger."[4] This undoubtedly refers to the heretic's summons before Cardinal Cajetan at Augsburg. Here he bravely refused to recant the errors attributed to him, and appealed from the pope badly informed to the pope to be better informed, and soon afterward from pope to General Council. In this stand at Augsburg, if we may trust the report of Spalatin, "Erasmus of Rotterdam gave Doctor Martin great applause, as did almost all the University of Louvain, and many eminent persons in divers lands."[5]

The interest of the humanists in Luther just at this time led some of them to prepare for Froben an edition of the Reformer's collected pamphlets. Responsibility

[1] Allen, ep. 872; L. C. ep. 87.

[2] The *Dialogue* of Sylvester Prierias, master of the Sacred Palace, was printed in the summer of 1518, and sent by Luther to Lang on September 16. Enders, i, 236.

[3] John Eck had attacked the *Theses* in a tract called *Obelisks*.

[4] Allen, ep. 877.

[5] Spalatin's account of the trial at Augsburg, *Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften*, hg. von J. G. Walch. Neue revidirte Stereotypausgabe, Band xxi, 1904, col. 3244. "Herr Erasmus Roterodamus gibt dem Doctori Martino einen grossen Zufall." "Zufall" then was the equivalent of "Beifall" or "Zustimmung." See Sanders: *Deutsches Wörterbuch, s. v.* "Fall," *in fin.*

for it has commonly been placed, apparently following a hint of Erasmus, at the door of Capito, and the anonymous preface is attributed to him.[1] But the express testimony of Conrad Pellican[2] that Beatus Rhenanus prepared the volume and sent it to press, is supported by other indications. This volume contained *The Resolutions*, with a dedication to Leo X, the *Dialogue of Prierias*, and Luther's *Answer*, Carlstadt's *Apology Against Eck*, Luther's *Sermon on Penance*, *Sermon on Indulgences*, *Sermon on the Ban*, *Sermons on the Ten Commandments*, and a few other small things. The preface, "To Candid Theologians," is undated; the colophon gives the date "Mense Octobri, 1518." The volume had no name of place or printer, but met at once with a wide sale.[3] A reprint was called for in 1518, and another early in 1519. On February 14th of that year Froben wrote Luther that he had already exported some hundreds of copies to France, Spain, Italy, Brabant, and England.[4]

The Cornell University Library possesses a particularly interesting copy of the first edition of this book, for it once belonged to the Amerbachs, as is proved by the inscription in Boniface's autograph, "Amerbachiorum," on the title-page.[5] They had it bound with a few other tracts, Luther's *De præparatione ad Eucharistiam* of November, 1518, and pamphlets by Bartholinus Perusinus and by Œcolampadius, these all with Froben's emblem and imprint. It was perhaps this very

[1] L. C. ep. 94.

[2] Pellican, who knew intimately Froben's circle, says: "Ad festum pentacostes (1519) perveni Basileam; quo tempore multi Lutherani libri impressi sunt Basileæ, opera et submissione Beati Rhenani, primum quidem a Johanne Frobenio, nempe," and then he goes on to describe the contents of this volume. See Pellican's *Chronicon*, p. 75. Froben himself wrote Luther (L.C. ep. 125) that he got the originals from Blasius Salmonius, an unknown Leipzig printer.

[3] First record of this in a letter of Beatus Rhenanus to Zwingli, December 26, 1518; Z. W., ep. 53.

[4] L. C. ep. 125.

[5] It was bought by Prof. George L. Burr from the duplicates of the Basle Library in 1904. There is a copy of the 1519 edition at Andover Theological Library in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I owe the reference to Pellican and others on this subject to Professor Burr.

copy that was seen by Erasmus, who at any rate very soon read the book, took fright at the inflammatory nature of some of the material in it, and wrote a long letter to Beatus Rhenanus on the subject,[1] and also advised Froben not to publish anything more of Luther's; —advice which he repeatedly drove home by letters from Louvain, where he spent the summer of 1519.[2]

Not knowing this, Luther had much reason to believe that Erasmus was one of his strong supporters, having been informed to this effect by Capito and by a rumor from the court of Albert of Mainz.[3] On March 18, 1519, he accordingly wrote a letter[4] to the last degree affectionate and respectful, couched in the following terms:

Greeting. Often as I converse with you and you with me, Erasmus, our glory and our hope, we do not yet know one another. Is that not extraordinary? No, it is not extraordinary, but a thing of every day. For who is there whose innermost parts Erasmus has not penetrated, whom Erasmus does not teach, in whom Erasmus does not reign? I mean of those who rightly love learning; for I rejoice that among Christ's other gifts to you, this also is numbered, that you displease many; for by this criterion I am wont to know the gifts of a merciful from the gifts of an angry God. I therefore congratulate you that while you please good men to the last degree, you no less displease those who alone wish to be highest and to please most. . . .

Now that I have learned from Fabritius Capito that my name is known to you on account of my little treatise on indulgences, and as I also see from the preface to the new edition of your *Handbook of the Christian Knight* that my ideas are not only known to you but approved by you, I am compelled to acknowledge your noble spirit, which has enriched me and all men, even though I write a barbarous style. Truly I know that you will esteem my gratitude and affection, as shown in this epistle, a very small matter, and that you would be content to have my mind burn secretly before God with love and gratitude to you; even as we are satisfied to know you without your being aware of it, having your spirit and services in books, without

[1] This letter has, unfortunately, not survived, but is mentioned in a letter of Beatus Rhenanus to Zwingli, of March 19, 1519, Z. W., ep. 86: "Erasmus . . . scripsit ad me literas quæ libellum æquare possent, de Lutherio et aliis rebus."

[2] Allen, ep. 1033, 1167; and to Alberto Pio, October 10,1525, LB. ep. 333; also LB. ix, 1094.

[3] L. C. epp. 78, 100, 127.

[4] Allen, ep. 933.

missives or conversation face to face. But shame and conscience do not suffer me not to thank you in words, especially now that my name has begun to emerge from obscurity, lest perchance some one might think my silence malignant and of ill appearance. Wherefore, dear Erasmus, learn, if it please you, to know this little brother in Christ also; he is assuredly your very zealous friend, though he otherwise deserves, on account of his ignorance, only to be buried in a corner, unknown even to your sun and climate. . . .

Philip Melanchthon prospers, except that we are all hardly able to prevent him from injuring his health by his too great rage for study. With the ardor of youth he burns both to be and to do all things unto all men. You would do us a favor if by a letter you would admonish him to keep himself for us and for learning, for while he is safe I know not what greater things we may not confidently hope. Andrew Carlstadt, who venerates you in Christ, sends greeting. May the Lord Jesus himself keep you forever, excellent Erasmus. Amen. I have been prolix. But you will know that you ought not always to read only learned letters; sometimes you must be weak with the weak.

BROTHER MARTIN LUTHER.

Melanchthon, just mentioned, had long been a devoted admirer of the great humanist, to whom he had written Greek verses while yet a boy,[1] and to whom he occasionally ventured to send greetings. The fame of his precocity had reached Erasmus, who recommended him for a position in England and always spoke of his talents with high regard.[2] Early in 1518[3] Melanchthon wrote to the elder scholar to contradict a rumor that he (Melanchthon) intended to revise his (Erasmus's) commentaries, and at the same time to assure him of his own and Luther's zealous affection. On April 22d[4] Erasmus replied, assuring him of constant friendship, and adding: "No one among us disapproves Luther's life; of his doc-

[1] Allen, ep. 454. *Cf.* ep. 457.

[2] Œcolampadius to Erasmus, March 26, 1517; Allen, ep. 563. In his reply, c. July, 1517, Allen, ep. 605, Erasmus wrote: "Of Melanchthon I think highly and hope splendidly, provided Christ will that that youth shall long survive us. He will simply eclipse Erasmus." *Cf.* also *Briefwechsel des Conradus Mutianus*, hg. K. Gillert, 1890, i, 250.

[3] Allen, ep. 910, dated January 5, 1519, probably rightly. In *Melanchthonis Epistolæ*, 1642, iii, 64, the letter is dated January 9th, and this is accepted by Enders, i, 345.

[4] Allen, ep. 947.

trines there are various opinions. I have not yet read his books. I have written of him to the Elector Frederic in my dedication to that prince of my edition of Suetonius."

This letter to Frederic was probably written in answer to an effort of that nobleman to get his support for Luther in the coming debate at Leipzig.[1] In his reply[2] Erasmus ventures to give advice as to how to treat the accused heretic, persecuted as he is by bad men who never want an excuse to charge others with errors. "As Luther is entirely unknown to me," he continues, "no one will suspect me of favoring him. I have not read his works. But his life is approved by all and those who attack him do it with ferocity, raging against him, but neither warning nor teaching him, as though they thirsted for blood rather than for the salvation of souls. All error is not heresy, for there are few writers ancient or modern in whom some error cannot be found."—The upshot of the letter was an encouragement not to give Luther up to his enemies.

Frederic's reply, dated May 14, 1519,[3] expressed joy that his subject's works are not condemned by good men. Erasmus acknowledged this,[4] at the same time writing to Spalatin;[5] and Frederic again answered in two letters, both of which have been lost. Their tenor, however, has been preserved in an epistle of the recipient to Bishop Fisher of Rochester, dated October 17, 1519:[6]

> The Elector Frederic of Saxony has sent me two letters in answer to mine. By his protection alone Luther lives. He said that he protected him rather for the sake of the cause than for his own person, and protested that he could not allow innocence to be oppressed in his dominions by those who sought their own profit and not the things of Jesus Christ.

[1] P. Kalkoff: *Erasmus, Luther, und Friedrich der Weise*, 1919, p. 22; *cf. Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, xvi, 134.
[2] Allen, ep. 939; L. C. ep. 141.
[3] Allen, ep. 963; L. C. ep. 145. The letter was carried by Jonas.
[4] Allen, ep. 979.
[5] Allen, ep. 978.
[6] L. C. ep. 188, Allen, ep. 1030.

With his letters to Spalatin and to the Elector Frederic, Erasmus sent one by Jonas to Luther, dated May 30, 1519.[1] In part he said:

Dearest brother in Christ, your epistle showing the keenness of your mind and breathing a Christian spirit, was most pleasant to me. I cannot tell you what a commotion[2] your books are raising here [at Louvain]. These men cannot be by any means disabused of the suspicion that your works are written by my aid and that I am, as they call it, the standard-bearer of your party. . . . I have testified to them that you are entirely unknown to me, that I have not read your books and neither approve nor disapprove anything. . . . I try to keep neutral, so as to help the revival of learning as much as I can. And it seems to me that more is accomplished by civil modesty than by impetuosity.

Several other letters written at this time give a strong idea of Erasmus's opinions, though it is noticeable that his tone differs considerably to different correspondents. To Mosellanus he wrote of a theologian at Louvain attacking Luther in public with such epithets as "heretic" and "Antichrist," though in fact, added the writer, Luther was equipped not with the new learning, but with the old scholasticism.[3] To Cardinal Campeggio he wrote that people wrongly suspected him of writing Hutten's *Nemo* and some tracts of Luther, though he has not even read them.[4] To Cardinal Wolsey he sent a much more elaborate apology,[5] saying, in part:

They accuse me of writing every hateful book that comes out. You might say that it was the very essence of calumny to confound, as they do, the cause of sound learning with that of Reuchlin and Luther, when really they have nothing to do with each other. . . . Luther is absolutely unknown to me, nor have I had time to read more than a page or two of his books, not because I have not wanted

[1] Allen, ep. 980; L. C. ep. 155.

[2] "The phrase 'tragœdias excitare' meant, of course, no more than 'to make a stir'; but for some reason it has become the fashion to render thus literally [*i.e.* 'to make a tragedy'] the words of Erasmus." J. H. Lupton: *Colet on Romans*, p. xiii. If the sarcasm is intentional, it is worthy of Gibbon.

[3] April 22, 1519. Allen, ep. 948.

[4] May 1, Allen, ep. 961.

[5] May 18, Allen, ep. 967; L. C. ep. 149; Nichols, ep. 563B, iii, p. 378, with wrong date, 1518.

to, but because my other occupations have not given me leisure. If he has written well, I deserve no credit; if otherwise, no blame, since of his writings not a jot is mine. Whoever wishes to investigate this matter will find what I say absolutely true. The man's life is approved by the unanimous consent of all, and the fact that his character is so upright that even his enemies find nothing in it to slander, must prejudice us considerably in his favor. So that even if I had abundant leisure to read the writings of such a man, I should not have the presumption to judge them, although even boys nowadays rashly pronounce this heretical and that erroneous. Indeed, I have sometimes been rather opposed to Luther, for fear that a prejudice might arise against sound learning, which I would not have burdened more than it is; nor has it escaped me that it would be an invidious task to tear up that from which the priests and monks reap their harvest.

After mentioning by name some of the early tracts of Luther, Erasmus goes on to depict the lively war waged in Germany between the lovers of literature and the obscurantists. Among the former, Eoban, Hutten, and Beatus Rhenanus are known to him personally, and he thoroughly approves their motives, though at times he has counseled them to moderate their mockery.

To the Wittenberg Reformer Lang, he wrote:[1]

All good men love the freedom of Luther, who, I doubt not, will have sufficient prudence to take care not to allow the affair to arouse faction and discord. I think we should rather strive to instil Christ into the minds of men than to fight with Christians; neither glory nor victory can be expected from them unless we curb the tyranny of the Roman see and its satellites, Dominicans, Carmelites, and Franciscans—I mean only the bad ones.

Even at this time it is plain that Erasmus was trying to steer a straight course between the Lutheran Scylla and the Roman Charybdis. Already, at this early date, there were fears that he would come out against the Reform, a thing which Capito begged him not to do.[2] At the same time his colleagues at Louvain believed that he was on the verge of becoming a Lutheran, and they declared war on him as such. It was reported that when

[1] Allen, ep. 983; L. C. ep. 156.
[2] Capito to Erasmus, Allen, ep. 938; L. C. ep. 139A, i, p. 570.

Erasmus heard of the Leipzig[1] debate between Luther and Eck, in which the former had maintained that popes and councils could err and that many of Huss's articles condemned at Constance were evangelical and Christian, he had exclaimed: "I fear that Martin will perish for his uprightness, but Eck ought to be called Geck"—the Dutch word for fool.[2]

Erasmus was more deeply involved than ever when his letter to Luther, quoted above, was published at Leipzig in June, 1519, and then at Augsburg in July.[3] His saying, in this epistle, that the Bishop of Liège was favorable to Luther, though probably true at the time it was written,[4] soon ceased accurately to describe the attitude of that fickle prelate. The bishop's anger,[5] especially hot after the matter had been taken up at Rome,[6] caused Erasmus promptly to republish the letter with "episcopus Leodiensis" changed to "eximius quidam,"[7] and to complain bitterly, in a letter to Jonas[8] of the publication of the missive as a breach of confidence. But his troubles did not end here. The inquisitor, James Hochstraten, found the letter and thought it sufficient to convict Erasmus of favoring Luther.[9] The universities of Louvain and Cologne had now declared war on Wittenberg,[10] while Erard de la

[1] Erasmus followed the course of the debate; he heard of Eck's attack as early as October 17, 1518 (*cf.* Allen, ep. 872); Mosellanus informed him of the preparations for the debate, January 6, 1519, Allen, ep. 911; and Melanchthon sent him Eck's *Excusatio* and his own *Defensio contra Eckium*, August, 1519, *Corpus Reformatorum*, i, 119.

[2] Luther heard this story, which is somewhat doubtful, from a correspondent in France, and wrote it to Staupitz on October 3, 1519, L. C. ep. 178.

[3] Enders ii, 64–66; L. C. ep. 155.

[4] Allen, iii, p. 168.

[5] Spoken of by Aleander, P. Kalkoff: *Die Depeschen des Nuntius Aleander*, 1897, p. 220.

[6] Pastor: *History of the Popes*, English transl. ed. by Antrobus, v. 398.

[7] In the *Farrago* of 1519; he even claimed that he wrote this in the first place; *Bibliotheca Erasmiana, Colloquia*, i, 65.

[8] May 10, 1521. G. Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas*, 1884 f, i, 54; Allen, ep. 1202.

[9] L. C. ep. 187.

[10] H. de Jongh: *L'Ancienne Faculté de Théologie de Louvain*, 1911, pp. 208 ff.

Marck, Bishop of Liège, and Adrian of Utrecht, now Bishop of Tortosa, applauded.[1]

The humanist now began to see that things were verging to a crisis. His main interest was to dissociate the cause he had most at heart, that of "sound learning," from the religious conflict. But over and beyond that he was determined, if possible, not to let an innocent man be crushed by the Pharisees he had himself been fighting all his life. His plan at this time was simply to impose silence on both sides, as had, indeed, already been proposed by the papal envoy to Saxony, Charles von Miltitz.[2] It is possible that Erasmus was already formulating his plan for a committee of arbitration under conditions which should insure temperate judgment and appropriate action. Spalatin had once proposed leaving the matter to the judgment of Matthew Lang, Archbishop of Salzburg, with whom Erasmus was now in communication, though by whom he was not, at this moment, particularly well received.[3]

Erasmus hoped to find powerful support for his mediating policy in Albert of Hohenzollern, Cardinal Archbishop of Mainz. Notwithstanding the unsavory past of this young prelate, and his patronage of the indulgence trade, it was thought that his interest in learning would make him a fit protector of the Christian Renaissance. Failing to see Albert on visits to Mainz in May and October, 1518, Erasmus dedicated to him his *Method of Theology*,[4] which, as Hutten[5] wrote, was greatly appreciated by the prelate. To set forth his program more perfectly, and to clear himself, Erasmus addressed to Albert, on October 19, 1519, a long letter,[6] protesting that he never had dealings with either Reuchlin or

[1] L. C. ep. 202.

[2] August 13, 1519, to Pope Leo, Allen, ep. 1007.

[3] Preface to *Paraphrase to Ephesians*, to Cardinal Campeggio, Allen, ep. 1062. On Spalatin's plan: Köstlin-Kawerau: *Martin Luther*, 1903, i, 223. On Matthew Lang and Erasmus, Enthoven, ep. 26.

[4] LB. v, 73 ff; i, p. 248; Lond. xxix, 29.

[5] Allen, ep. 923.

[6] L. C. ep. 192, Allen, ep. 1023.

Luther, that the latter was entirely unknown to him, that he had never even read his books, and that he had advised against their publication.

Luther wrote me a right Christian letter [he continued], at least to my way of thinking, and I answered, incidentally warning the man not to write anything seditious or insolent to the Roman pontiff, nor anything arrogant or fierce, but to preach the evangelical doctrine with sincere mind and with all gentleness. This I did civilly in order to make my advice more effective. I argued that he could thus best conciliate the opinion of his favorers, from which some have gathered that I favored him, although no one except myself had ever admonished him.

How much better it would be, the writer goes on to set forth, to have a Christian in error corrected than driven to destruction; but Luther's enemies had acted most un-Christianly toward him. If the Saxon had spoken immoderately of indulgences and of the power of the pope, his opponents, Alvarez,[1] Prierias, and Cajetan, had surpassed his licence. In fact, Luther was rather imprudent than impious, charged as he was with lack of reverence for Aquinas and for the Mendicant Orders, and with diminishing the profits of the trade in papal pardons, and with putting the gospel above the schoolmen. Intolerable heresies those! "They cry heresy at whatever displeases them or is beyond their comprehension, and make it heresy to know Greek and to write good Latin." Through all Erasmus's hedging in this letter, his preference for Luther, and his desire, if not to help him, at least to keep him safe from unjust persecution, is apparent.

This letter was intrusted to Ulrich von Hutten, and by him shown to several friends. Luther saw a manuscript copy of it in January, 1520, and was much pleased with it. "In it," he said,[2] "Erasmus shows his solicitude

[1] This was not the mediæval theologian mentioned by Allen in his note *loc. cit.*, but John Alvarez (1488–1557), a son of the Duke of Alva, a Dominican who taught at Salamanca and was later made Bishop of Cordova and cardinal. See note L. C. i, 242. He had written to Erasmus earlier, Allen, ep. 506.

[2] Enders, ii, 304-306. L. C. ep. 220.

ALBERT OF HOHENZOLLERN, CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP
ELECTOR OF MAINZ

From a Painting by Lucas Cranach

for me, and defends me nobly, though he seems to do nothing less than to take my part, so dextrous is he according to his wont. Perhaps the letter will be printed." It was indeed soon printed by Melchior Lotter at Wittenberg.[1] Erasmus naturally took this indiscretion of Hutten's very ill; if chance gave the letter to the press, he exclaimed, it was most unlucky; if perfidy, it was more than Punic.[2] In sending the letter to the press before he had even shown it to its addressee, it is probable that Hutten thought he was only carrying out the wishes of the writer; certainly the epistle was well adapted for public reading.[3]

Provoked as he was by the Reformers, Erasmus was still more enraged by the Catholics, and especially by his fellow theologians at Louvain. These "champions of bad letters," as he called them, issued, on August 31, 1519, a condemnation of a number of passages from Luther's works, which was solemnly ratified by the whole university on November 7th.[4]

Luther answered Louvain and Cologne in March, 1520: "They have condemned not only me," he breaks forth,[5] "but Occam, Mirandola, Valla, and Reuchlin, to say nothing of Wesel, Lefèvre d'Étaples, and Erasmus, that ram caught by the horns in the bushes!" Erasmus read the answer and wrote Melanchthon that it pleased him wonderfully, for it had begun to make his colleagues ashamed of their premature pronouncement, but that he wished his name had been left out, as it only brought odium on him and did not help Luther.[6] His opinion of the Wittenberg professor was certainly more favorable

[1] It was also printed at Leipzig in 1519. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, i, 93.

[2] 1520. Allen, ep. 1152.

[3] *Hutteni Opera*, ed. Böcking, ii, 311; P. Kalkoff: *Ulrich von Hutten*, 1920, p. 521.

[4] Köstlin-Kawerau, i, 266. H. de Jongh: *L'Ancienne Faculté de Théologie de Louvain*, 1911, pp. 208 ff.

[5] *Werke*, Weimar, vi, 183.

[6] *Corpus Reformatorum*, i, 206. On a lost letter from Luther to Erasmus, of May, 1520, perhaps in answer to the one from Erasmus to Melanchthon, *cf.* Enders, ii, 397. L. C. ep. 254.

than he thought it prudent to avow in his letters, at least in those designed for publication. A disciple, Hermann Hump, who lived with him during the last half of 1519 and the first months of 1520, wrote Luther on March 14, 1520, that Erasmus almost adored him, though he kept his opinion for his table companions.[1] Indeed, the humanist himself wrote Jonas,[2] April 9, 1520: "I would not have the Dominicans know what a friend I am to Luther. This university has contracted incurable madness. Atensis, indeed, has perished, but Egmond and Latomus act more odiously than he." The altercation with Egmond waxed very hot indeed about this time, the special cause of it being Erasmus's old letter to Luther "badly understood and worse interpreted."[3] The quarrel finally reached such a point that the rector of the university summoned both parties to a public conference to settle their differences. One of the wittiest bits of Erasmus's writings is the account of this conference for his friend More.[4] Asked to make a specific complaint, Erasmus said that Egmond had accused him of favoring Luther, which was a lie. Egmond then lost his temper, burst into foul language, called Erasmus an old turncoat, Luther's harbinger, a falsifier of the Bible, a forger of papal letters, and a slanderer who had accused him, Egmond, of being drunk. Erasmus demurely admitted the last charge, though he said he only spoke of it as a matter of common knowledge, but added that, though Egmond might shout against Luther till he split for all he cared, he must not, in future, mix his, Erasmus's, name in the affair. To Egmond's demand that he write something against the heretic, or at least publish an opinion that he had been successfully refuted by Louvain, the humanist replied that, judging in the same

[1] Enders, ii, 350–352. L. C. ep. 236.

[2] Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas*, i, 43. L. C. ep. 245. Allen, ep. 1088.

[3] Allen, ep. 1033.

[4] L. C. ep. 313. Louvain, November, 1520. Allen, ep. 1162.

way, his opponent must be a Lutheran himself, for *he* had not written anything against Luther.

On June 15, 1520, the bull, *Exsurge Domine*, threatening to excommunicate Luther if he did not recant within sixty days after its promulgation in Germany, was signed by Leo at Rome, and intrusted to Eck, who posted it during the last days of September in the dioceses of Brandenburg and Merseburg. About the same time Aleander was dispatched from Rome to the Netherlands to meet Charles, who was coming from Spain to be crowned emperor, in order to secure his support for the Church in suppressing the heretic.

Erasmus now resolved to do all in his power to prevent extreme measures being taken. Judging that it would be both inexpedient for the attainment of his end and dangerous to himself to come out openly for Luther, he went to work in a quiet but persistent way to influence persons in power to act with leniency, and especially to moderate the passions of the leaders of each side. Luther and his friends sinned in the violence of their invective, but he hoped to bring them to reason.[1] Their opponents, the monks, or "Pharisees," as he called them, were beyond the appeals of reason; so he merely worked to thwart them of the bloody triumph they desired.

When he later became Luther's enemy he skillfully covered up as much as possible the traces of his activity in the summer of 1520, and, as he had acted with caution, it was not hard to do so. It is sometimes difficult to determine exactly how far his efforts went. To Œcolampadius he wrote, for example, on May 15, 1520, that Luther's books would have been burned in England but for the intervention of "a humble and vigilant friend. Not that I undertake to judge Luther's books," he qualifies, "but this tyranny by no means pleases me."[2]

One of the first potentates whom he endeavored to

[1] He wrote Spalatin, July, 1520, that he hoped Luther would moderate his language. Allen, ep. 1119.

[2] So in a letter to Melanchthon, L. C. epp. 257, 258; Allen, epp. 1102, 1113.

influence to act as mediator was his old friend Henry VIII of England, who spent part of the summer at Calais negotiating with Francis I and Charles V. Erasmus joined him in July, and, in his own words, "talked some of writing against Luther, but more of means of making peace in the Church."[1]

Erasmus's efforts apparently met with a somewhat chilly reception, for on September 9th he wrote Geldenhauer[2] that he feared the worst for poor Luther, so much were the princes and Leo incensed against him. Would that Luther had followed his advice, for the formidable bull has already been published against him, though Leo had forbidden this to be done (!). The source of the whole affair, according to the humanist, was hatred of learning and the stupidity of the priests. He assured his correspondent, probably not without reason, that he (Erasmus) might get a bishopric if only he would write against Luther.

The bull had indeed been published in Germany during the summer, both by supporters of the pope and, with a railing commentary, by Hutten, who thought thus to help Luther in the eyes of his countrymen.[3] The

[1] Lond. xxiii, 6, col. 1229. L.B. ep. 650. On this visit *cf.* Meyer, p. 45; Kalkoff: *Vermittlungspolitik*, p. 19 ff. It took place between July 6th and 30th. About this time he saw his friend More at Bruges, Allen, 1184, Enthoven, p. 10. Various rumors of this interview with Henry got out, the most interesting of which is found in a letter from Myconius to Clivanus, November 20, 1520, published by Hess: *Erasmus von Rotterdam*, 1790, ii, 607: "I will tell you something of Erasmus. He is a scoundrel. Hear what he did. He was summoned by the king of England to take counsel while he was here. The king slapped him on the back and said; 'Why don't you defend that good man, Luther?' Erasmus answered, 'Because I am not enough of a theologian; since Louvain has given me the robe of a grammarian I meddle with no such business.' After many words the King said, 'You are a good fellow, Erasmus,' and sent him away with fifty ducats. Then Erasmus went to Frankfort. . . . He intended to go on to Basle, but was called back by the king of Spain." L. C. ep. 338. Erasmus was present at the splendid entry of Charles V into Bruges on July 25, 1520. P. Kalkoff: *Ulrich von Hutten*, 1920, p. 498.

[2] Allen, ep. 1141. *Cf.* his letter to Chieregato, September 13, 1520, Allen, ep. 1144.

[3] Bibliography of the first editions of the bull, *Exsurge Domine*, in *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde*, ix, 1918, pp. 187 ff; x, 1919, p. 19.

officials, however, were not far behind. Aleander and Caracciolo, the papal nuncios who had been dispatched from Rome on July 27th,[1] arrived in Cologne in September, and published the bull here on the 22d. Four days later Aleander was in Antwerp for the same purpose, and on September 28th he had here his first interview with Charles of Spain, from whom he promptly secured a decree against the Lutherans in the Netherlands. This was doubtless a bitter blow to Erasmus, who wrote the Reformer that the court was filled with "beggar-tyrants" (his favorite epithet for the mendicants) and that there was no hope in the emperor.[2] Indeed, it is remarkable that he who so freely eulogized many of the potentates of the day should seldom have had a good word to say for his own sovereign. A story was current that he said of Charles and Ferdinand, "These two cubs will make Germany smart some day."[3]

After this triumph the indefatigable legate proceeded to Louvain, where he posted the bull on October 8th, solemnly burned the heretic's books, and made a violent speech attacking Erasmus. This was followed the next day by a renewed attack from Egmond and by the exclusion of Erasmus and Dorp, his only supporter among the professors, from the theological faculty.[4] For these acts Aleander and Egmond were bitterly scored in an anonymous pamphlet, the *Acta Academiæ Lovaniensis*, which has been attributed to several writers, but was probably from the pen of Erasmus.[5] The style, the

[1] For these dates and facts, Kalkoff: *Luthers römischer Prozess*. Rom. 1906.

[2] Luther to Spalatin, October 11, 1520. Enders, ii, 491, *cf.* iii, 90. In Luther's phrase "mendicotyranni" we recognize Erasmus's favorite, *πτωχοτύραννοι*. L. C. ep. 304, *cf.* ep. 406.

[3] *Luthers Tischreden in der Mathesischen Sammlung*, ed. Kroker, No. 498. Letter of Besold to V. Dietrich, April 11, 1542, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, xix, 1922, 95. An exception to the general rule that Erasmus never praised Charles is to be found in the *Institutio Christiani Principis*, which was, however, written in 1515, when Charles was a mere boy.

[4] P. Kalkoff: *Anfänge der Gegenreformation*, ii, 35 ff. Also the article by the same scholar to be found in Zwingli's *Werke*, vii, 409.

[5] The proof of the authorship given in P. Kalkoff: *Vermittlungspolitik*, 23 ff. The similarity of the style of the *Acta* to that of Erasmus was early noticed.

occurrence of expressions used in his letters at that time, the trend of the satire, the minute acquaintance with circumstances known better to Erasmus than to anyone else, and the publication of the pamphlet shortly after the events recorded and at Cologne, while he was in that city, all tend to prove that he was the author. The purpose of the tract was not only revenge on Aleander, but also to weaken the position of that envoy by casting doubts on the legitimacy of his nunciature and on the authenticity of the bull, and by assuring the public that the Romanists were able only to burn Luther's books, not to refute them.

Shortly after the scene at Louvain Erasmus followed the emperor to Cologne in order to meet two men reckoned as the chief supporters of the new movement, Francis von Sickingen and the Elector Frederic of Saxony.[1] In the current, but unjustified, idealization of Sickingen, he is represented as the perfect knight of Christ and of Germany, standing boldly amid the forces of darkness for the truth, for the Gospel, and for the fatherland. As a matter of fact he was a self-seeking, brusque soldier, capable, when he was put in command of an army against France, of intriguing with the enemy for his own personal profit.[2] By his friend Ulrich von Hutten he had been sufficiently interested in the Lutheran cause to see in it a powerful support to his anti-imperial and anti-Spanish policy, and he therefore tried to protect Luther, though he was, in fact, soon duped, or seduced, by abler politicians than himself, Aleander and Glapion. But,

Vadianische Briefsammlung (*Mitteilungen zur vaterländischen Geschichte*, 25. St. Gallen. 1890 ff) ii, 346. The pamphlet is reprinted in Luther's *Werke*, Erlangen edition, *Opera latina varii argumenti*, iv, 308–314. *Cf.* De Jongh: *L'Ancienne Faculté de Théologie de Louvain*, p. 241.

[1] On Erasmus at Cologne, *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, hg. von Horawitz und Hartfelder, 1886, Nos. 181, 200; L. C. ep. 332, 438; Enthoven, ep. 26. LB. ep. 709.

[2] The older literature, the biographies of Hutten by Strauss, and of Sickingen by Ulmann, carried this idealization to an extreme. See W. Friedensburg: "Franz von Sickingen." *Im Morgenrot der Reformation*, 1912, pp. 557-666; P. Kalkoff: *Ulrich von Hutten und die Reformation*, 1920.

though they did little real service to the Evangelical cause, the two knights, Hutten and Sickingen, were now outwardly zealous for it. Erasmus's more cautious method of protecting Luther from unjust condemnation seemed to them little better than cowardly because of its calculated moderation. Hutten accordingly addressed to his old and formerly revered friend a rather insulting invitation to keep safe,[1] on August 15, 1520:

> When Reuchlin's affair got hot you seemed in more weak terror of those fellows [the Roman Inquisitors] than you ought to have been. And now in Luther's case you try hard to persuade his enemies that you are as far as possible from defending the common good of Christianity, while they know that you believe just the opposite from what you say.

And again on November 13th:[2]

> Fly, fly! Keep yourself safe for us! I am in sufficient, even infinite peril, but my mind is inured to danger and to the vicissitudes of fortune, while with you it is different. Those fellows all cry out that you are the author of this business and that from you as from a fountain-head has flowed whatever now displeases Leo; they say that you went before us, that you taught us, that you first incited the minds of men with the love of liberty and that we are your followers.

In vain did a common friend, Capito, beg Hutten to follow a more peaceful course and especially to spare true friends like the old humanist. While still breathing out fire and slaughter, Hutten replied that for him to leave the fatherland in slavery would be dishonorable.[3] At first he wondered that Erasmus did not reply to his first letter[4] but, from the Ebernburg, near Worms, he wrote Nesen: "The people at Cologne have recently sent me letters, but Erasmus has sent nothing, fearing, like a coward, that what he writes may be betrayed." In this case, a most reasonable fear![5]

[1] *Hutteni Opera*, ed. Böcking, 1859, i, p. 367. L. C. ep. 285; Allen, ep. 1135.
[2] Böcking, i, 423; L. C. ep. 336, Allen, ep. 1161.
[3] Hutten to Capito, August 28, 1520, *Zeitschrift des Fuldaer Geschichtsvereins*, viii, 1909, pp. 52 ff; Kalkoff: *Hutten*, 1920, pp. 241 f.
[4] "Miror, Erasmus an scripserit," *ibid.*
[5] Hutten to Nesen, Kalkoff: *Hutten*, 1920, p. 573.

Far different in character was Frederic, well named the Wise, with whom Erasmus came into direct communication during his three weeks' stay at Cologne in November, 1520. Ever since the letters exchanged between the two, eighteen months before, the elector had been trying to get the support of the humanist in order to make as good a front as possible against the assaults of the partisans of the pope. The several imperial embassies at Wittenberg in 1520 may have brought news of the humanist, and on the other side Frederic selected as his envoy a particularly trustworthy young poet, now in the service of Maximilian of Zevenberghen, one John Alexander Brassicanus by name. By him he sent an invitation to the great scholar to come to Wittenberg, and he also sent, as a token of his esteem, a medallion of himself as Lieutenant of the Empire.[1]

While he declined the invitation to Wittenberg, Erasmus counted on seeing Frederic at the imperial coronation, which took place at Aix-la-Chapelle on October 23d. As the elector, however, was detained while on his way thither by an attack of gout, he waited at Cologne, and there, on October 31st, had an audience with his imperial master, who arrived on October 28th.[2] At this meeting, in the sacristy of the cathedral, the emperor promised that he would allow the way of the law to which he had already been committed by his "capitulation," or agreement signed at his election. When an emperor was chosen it was customary for the electors not only to demand gratifications of money, but also political concessions of all sorts, and Frederic, who had refused the donative, insisted, having Luther's case in mind, that no subject of the Empire should be outlawed or condemned without due hearing. Charles, therefore, merely confirmed in this promise his previous undertaking.

[1] On all this P. Kalkoff: *Erasmus, Luther, und Friedrich der Weise*, 1919, pp. 22, 87 f; The medallion is reproduced in P. Schreckenbach und F. Neubert, *Martin Luther*,[2] 1918, p. 54.

[2] He hastened from Aix on account of the outbreak of the plague. J. Paquier: *Lettres de Jérôme Aléandre*, 1910, p. 61.

On Sunday, November 4th, the papal legates visited Frederic at his lodgings on the Square of the Three Kings, and demanded that the heretic's books be burned and that he himself be either punished by the elector, or be delivered to them bound. The politic old prince gave them one of those evasive answers in which he was an adept, disclaiming any intention of protecting heresy, but announcing that he would not deliver up an uncondemned man. The next day Frederic sent for Erasmus, and their conversation has been carefully noted by Spalatin,[1] who was present. There was a large open fire before which the humanist took his stand, warming his hands at the blaze behind his back while facing the benign and incorruptible old statesman for whom he had already conceived a high admiration. The elector asked the scholar to use his native tongue, the Dutch (which he called Belgian), but Erasmus preferred to speak Latin. This the prince understood, though he did not venture to speak it, but put his questions through Spalatin. The first and most important of these was whether Luther had erred. The man so bluntly interrogated at first closed his lips with a smack and kept them compressed for some minutes, but then, as the elector, according to his custom when discussing serious matters, regarded him with grave, wide-open eyes, he suddenly burst into these words: "Luther has erred in two points—in attacking the crown of the pope and the bellies of the monks." The winged word flew throughout Germany and helped the accused not a little.

Satisfied with having planted the perfect epigram, Erasmus took his leave and walked with Spalatin to the house of Count Hermann of Neuenahr, Provost of

[1] Spalatin's fullest account exists in German MS. at Gotha, but has never been published in the original. Ludwig von Seckendorf translated it into Latin and published it with the wrong date, December 5th, in his *Historia Lutheranismi*, of which I consult the second edition, 1694, i, 125 f, section 34, 81. A much briefer account is found in *Spalatins Nachlass*, ed. Neudecker und Preller, 1851, i, p. 131, and something may be found in Luther's *Tischreden*, Weimar, i, p. 131.

Cologne and a disciple of the Reformer, and there he drew up a series of short propositions called *Axioms*[1] to serve as a basis for the settlement of the whole affair. In this document he showed most strongly his sympathy with much of the Reformer's program, and his wish to be of service to it. He stated: That the origin of the persecution was hatred of learning and love of tyranny; that the method of procedure corresponded with the origin, consisting, namely, of clamor, conspiracy, bitter hatred, and virulent writing; that the agents put in charge of the prosecution were suspect; that all good men and lovers of the Gospel were very little offended with Luther; that certain men had abused the easy-going kindness of the pope. The author advised that precipitate counsels be avoided, as the fierceness of the bull had scandalized all and was unworthy of the gentleness of Christ's vicar, and that the cause be examined by impartial and experienced persons. Only two universities had condemned Luther, and they, though condemning, had not refuted him. The accused demanded only justice in submitting himself to impartial judges, and his motives were pure, whereas those of his adversaries were corrupt and violent. The honor of the pope and the cause of evangelical truth required that Luther be tried by grave, unsuspected men of mature judgment. Erasmus added orally that Luther had been too violent; and Spalatin promised to remonstrate with him.[2]

Frederic was both surprised and pleased at the boldness of the *Axioms*. He sent his adviser a chamois gown, but, if we may trust a bit of gossip, said to his chaplain, Spalatin: "What sort of a man is Erasmus, anyway? One never knows where he is." With the elector was his cousin, Duke George of Albertine Saxony, who, as a sincere Catholic, was much disappointed in Erasmus's attitude, and, on hearing the *Axioms*, burst out: "The plague take him. You can never tell what

[1] Printed in *Lutheri opera latina varii argumenti*, v, 238 ff.
[2] LB. x, 1659.

he means. I really prefer the Wittenbergers, for at least they say yes or no."[1] When the legates called on Frederic on November 6th, they received a complete refusal of their demands.[2]

Though intensely annoyed at the part played by the humanist, Aleander judged it prudent to win him over if possible, and accordingly invited him several times to dinner. Erasmus always declined these invitations, fearing, as he said later, that he would be poisoned.[3]

He continued to try to influence the emperor and his counsellors, not directly by personal conversations, but through a Dominican named John Faber, with whom he had been in touch at Louvain. The friar, with his aid and at his instigation, drew up a memorial[4] entitled: *The Advice of One Desirous of the Peace of the Church.* He points out that, after all, the peace of Christianity is the main consideration and that pious men should act with an eye to this only, without considering exactly what Luther deserved. As in the *Axioms*, so here, Faber traced the origin of the persecution to the hatred of good

[1] *Luthers Tischreden*, Weimar, iv, no. 4899. This account, in Luther's table talk twenty years after the event is intrinsically probable, though colored by Luther's dislike of Erasmus. The chamois gown is also mentioned in one of Erasmus's epistles, Lond. xviii, 37, LB. ep. 709, as a damask gown.

[2] *Narratio per Henricum Priorem Gundensem* [*i.e.*, of Ghent] *scripta. Lutheri opera lat. varii arg.* v, 249.

[3] Allen, ep. 1188.

[4] On Faber, N. Paulus: *Die deutschen Dominikaner im Kampfe gegen Luther* (*Eräuterungen und Ergänzungen zu Janssens Geschichte des Deutschen Volkes*), 1906, pp. 301 ff. In my judgment Paulus proves that Faber was the author of the *Consilium cujusdam*, though Maurenbrecher and Kalkoff (*Vermittlungspolitik des Erasmus*, 1 ff) attribute it to Erasmus, and its style was early seen to resemble his: *cf. Vadianische Briefsammlung*, ii, 346. Erasmus never admitted it, though he praised it in letters—*e.g.*, Lond. xxvii 2, LB. ep. 1195; and almost avows it as his own, Allen, ep. 1199. He denied it, however, Lond. xvii, 19; LB. ep. 603. The work was also attributed to Zwingli, and is now most conveniently found in the old edition of his works by Schuler und Schulthess, 1832, iii, 1 ff, and translated into English in *The Latin Works and Correspondence of H. Zwingli*, ed. S. M. Jackson, 1912, pp. 57 ff. Schlottmann, in an able work anticipating many of Kalkoff's positions, *Erasmus Redivivus*, 2 vols., 1883, 1889, i, p. 230, attributes the *Concilium* to Erasmus, but Allen, iv, 357, accepts the joint authorship of Erasmus and Faber.

letters, and observed that only two universities had condemned, and that without refuting, Luther. The bull is disliked by all who love Leo, and while the papal agents are burning Luther's books they are spreading his opinions. Moreover, the accused heretic is a man of good life. Let his cause, therefore, be committed to a tribunal of impartial and learned judges to be appointed by Charles and by the kings of England and Hungary. Erasmus pressed the acceptance of this plan on most of the emperor's agents, on Gattinara, Adrian of Utrecht the future pope, Villinger, Albert of Mainz, the bishop of Liège, and Conrad Peutinger.[1] His efforts were not as successful as he could have desired. Faber, however, brought up a similar plan again at the Diet of Worms, though without result.[2]

Another important ally in the work of mediation was Wolfgang Capito, now in the service of Albert of Mainz. It is probably due to his influence that now and later Albert stood for a policy of reconciliation.[3]

Erasmus still tried to remain neutral. To Reuchlin he wrote, November 8th:[4]

> You see what a fatal tragedy is now acting, the catastrophe of which it is impossible to foresee. . . . I prefer to be a spectator rather than an actor, not because I refuse to incur the risks of battle for the cause of Christ, but because I see the work is above my mediocrity. . . . I always try to separate your case and that of learning from that of Luther.

To Justus Jonas at Erfurt he wrote, on November 11th:[5]

> Aleander, a man sufficiently skillful in the three tongues, but apparently made for this tragedy, is here. . . . He burned Luther's books . . . and attacked me more violently than that man, because

[1] Lond. xxvii, 2 xiii, 30. LB. ep. 1195; Paulus, *op. cit.*, 302; Allen, ep. 1156.

[2] *Judicium Fratris Johannis Fabri in causa Lutheri.* Wrede: *Reichstagsakten unter Carl V.*, ii, 484, note 2.

[3] Capito to Luther, December, 1521. Enders, iii, 259. *Cf.* P. Kalkoff: *W. Capito im Dienste Albrechts von Mainz.* 1907. Also *cf.* Hedio's letter to Zwingli, *Zwinglis Werke*, vii, 355.

[4] Allen, ep. 1155.

[5] Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas*, no. 41. Allen, ep. 1157. *Cf.* Erasmus to Barland, November 30, 1520, Allen, ep. 1163.

he and his party believe that I am the only obstacle to the immediate destruction of Luther, although for many causes I never mix in this affair. I cherish sound learning; I cherish the gospel truth; I will do it silently if I may not do it openly.

It was perhaps after hearing of some such expression as this that the Saxon Reformer wrote a friend that, though there was no misunderstanding between himself and Erasmus, yet he often discussed with Melanchthon the question of how far the humanist was from the Gospel truth.[1]

After three weeks at Cologne Erasmus returned to Louvain, part of the journey being in the company of that merry princess, Germaine de Foix, widow of Ferdinand of Aragon, and now wife of the Margrave John of Brandenburg.[2] The trip was made difficult by the floods, the horses being, as their master wittily phrased it, "almost shipwrecked."[3]

Safe at home again, Erasmus wrote two letters on the same day, December 7th, which are a striking instance of how much he varied his tone to suit different correspondents. To the Reformer Capito, he wrote, referring to the vigorous Lutheran agitation in the Netherlands: "Our Dutchmen have rejected the bull of the pontiff, or rather of Louvain. The theologians think that Luther can only be conquered by my help and tacitly implore it. Far be this madness from me!"[4]

Feeling obliged to cover his retreat at Rome, however, he put the case differently, on the very same day, to Campeggio.[5] After pointing out the odious way in which

[1] To Spengler, November 17, 1520. De Wette: *Luthers Briefe*, i, p. 525. L. C. ep. 337.

[2] Lond. xviii, 37, LB. ep. 709. "The Queen of Aragón," Erasmus calls her. Dürer saw her and her husband about this time. *Dürers Schriftlicher Nachlass* (1908), pp. 46, 116.

[3] Allen, ep. 1169.

[4] Allen, ep. 1165; L. C. ep. 352. Erasmus calls *Exsurge Domine*, "the bull of Louvain," because most of the errors of Luther condemned in the bull had been lifted bodily from the pronunciamento of the Belgian university.

[5] Allen, ep. 1167; L. C. ep. 351.

Luther had been treated—unwarned, untaught, unrefuted, only attacked and persecuted—he goes on:

> I am not so impious as to oppose the Roman Church, nor so ungrateful as to embarrass Leo . . . but yet I am not so imprudent as to resist one [Luther] whom it is hardly safe for kings to oppose. . . . If the corrupt morals of the Roman Church need a great and present remedy, certainly it is not for men like me to take so much upon themselves. I prefer the present state of affairs to exciting new tumults which turn out differently from what one supposes. . . . Let others affect the martyr's crown, I do not think myself worthy of this dignity. . . . Many grave and prudent men think the religious affair would have a happier issue if it were treated with less fury and left to a body of grave, learned, and sedate men.

Such intervention did little good at Rome. The sixty days given Luther to recant expired on November 28th. Instead of doing so, however, the bold rebel burned the bull and the whole canon law on December 10th. The bull of excommunication was signed at Rome on January 6, 1521, though not promulgated at Worms until May 6th.

The failure of Erasmus's plan of arbitration, made evident by the course of events during the winter of 1520-21, marks a turning-point in the humanist's attitude toward the Reformation. Though he could never have been called a follower of Luther, he had hitherto labored to protect him from unjust persecution and to give him a fair hearing. He believed that if the Saxon would only be moderate he might accomplish much good, and, for the sake of peace, he wrote him no less than five personal letters, and appealed also to his friends, to urge him to apply himself to the cause of reform with a mind uncorrupted by hatred or violence.[1]

But Luther's *Prelude on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, an attack on the Catholic sacramental system, and his burning of the canon law at Wittenberg on December 10th, not only shocked the humanist, but convinced him that Luther's cause was hopeless. He had

[1] All but one of these letters (that quoted above) have perished, but numerous traces of the correspondence are left. *Cf.* Allen, ep. 1041, and iv, 339.

tried his best, he protested, to devise a plan by which the friar might win the glory of obedience, and the pope that of clemency, but what could one do for a man who acted as if he did not want to be saved?[1] His position, as he would have it understood, was perhaps most fully explained in two letters to Nicholas Everard, President of the Estates of Holland, of which the first, published four hundred years after he wrote it, may here be translated in part:[2]

> With what odium Luther burdens the cause of learning and that of Christianity! As far as he can he involves all men in his business. Everyone confessed that the Church suffered under the tyranny of certain men, and many were taking counsel to remedy this state of affairs. Now this man has arisen to treat the matter in such a way that he fastens the yoke on us more firmly, and that no one dares to defend even what he has said well. Six months ago I warned him to beware of hatred. *The Babylonian Captivity* has alienated many from him, and he daily puts forth more atrocious things.

Before we judge Erasmus for using too strong language let us examine what the Wittenberg innovator was actually saying at this time. That his language was sometimes unbridled, likely to arouse fierce passions in the multitude, cannot be denied. The most "atrocious" thing he said, and one that has been quoted against him by his enemies for four hundred years, was the following sentence in a tract published in July, 1520:[3] "If we punish thieves with the gallows, robbers with the sword, and heretics with fire, why should we not rather attack with all arms these masters of perdition, these cardinals, these popes, and all the offscourings of the Roman Sodom, who eternally corrupt the Church of God, and why should we not wash our hands in their blood?" Imagine the effect

[1] Allen, ep. 1203.

[2] Allen, epp. 1186, 1188. February 25, and March, 1521.

[3] This was in a note, or appendix, to an edition of Prierias's *Epitoma Responsionis ad M. Lutherum*, published by Luther himself. The passage is found in *Luthers Werke*, Weimar ed., vi, 347; *Lutheri Opera latina varii argumenti*, Erlangen ed., ii, 107. The latest Catholic treatment of it by H. Grisar in *Historisches Jarhbuch*, Band 41, pp. 247 ff, 1921.

of this fierce harangue on the sensitive scholar, and then let us hear his own sorrowful confession of his disappointment that the man from whom he had hoped a real counter-agent against the forces of evil had not only doomed himself to perish, but had acted so as to make the Pharisees in the opposite camp all the stronger. In the letter quoted last he continues:

> Nor do I see on what Luther is relying, unless perhaps on the Bohemians. I fear that if we turn from the Lutheran Scylla we shall fall into Charybdis. Some men, led by desire for revenge, now accept the yoke and bridle of the papal bulls, which perchance they will later wish had not been executed. and the same has come to pass in regard to the Apologies. And Luther acts like the proverbial goat who jumps into a ditch without looking to see how he can get out again.

So in other letters the humanist drives home the point that he can no longer support a man who, not content with courting wilful martyrdom, would bring down the cause of learning in his own ruin.[1] With the Bohemian Brethren, in whom he saw the chief support of the Reformer, and who actively applied to him at this time for approval, he also expostulated.[2]

But the gentle scholar's dislike of the rough road of revolution was not due entirely to considerations of the public good. He felt more and more painfully the delicacy of his own situation, for, as he pointed out to a powerful gentleman in Holland—perhaps the imperial councilor Maximilian von Zevenberghen—if he supported Luther he would be prosecuted, if he opposed him he would draw on himself the hatred of Germany.[3] In a mood of unusual frankness as well as of discouragement, he wrote to his friend, Richard Pace, a letter never published until the eighteenth century. As it contains

[1] Allen, ep. 1185.

[2] On a visit of two Bohemian Brethren to Erasmus in the summer of 1520 see Allen, iv, 291 f. His letter to the Hussite Captain of Moravia, Artlebus de Boskowitz, January 28, 1521, Allen, ep. 1183; L. C. ep. 385.

[3] Allen, ep. 1166; L. C., ep. 346. Kalkoff suggests that the addressee may have been originally Maximilian of Zevenberghen, sometimes called Transylvanus, *Anfänge der Gegenreformation in den Niederlanden*, i, p. 105, note 23.

the most damaging admissions he ever made about his attitude toward the Reformation, some part of it must here be transcribed:[1]

> Would that some *deus ex machina* might make a happy ending for this drama so inauspiciously begun by Luther! He himself gives his enemies the dart by which they transfix him, and acts as if he did not wish to be saved, though frequently warned by me and by his friends to tone down the sharpness of his style. . . . I cannot sufficiently wonder at the spirit in which he has written. Certainly he has loaded the cultivators of literature with heavy odium. Many of his teachings and admonitions were splendid, but would that he had not vitiated these good things by mixing intolerable evils! If he had written all things piously, yet I should not have courage to risk my life for the truth. All men have not strength for martyrdom. I fear lest, if any tumult should arise, I should imitate Peter [in denying the Lord]. I follow the just decrees of popes and emperors because it is right; I endure their evil laws because it is safe. I think this is allowable to good men, if they have no hope of successful resistance. . . . Christ, whose cause my little writings have ever served, will look after me. After Luther has been burned to ashes, and when some not too sincere inquisitors and theologians shall take glory to themselves for having burned him, good princes should take care not to allow these gentlemen to rage against the innocent and meritorious, and let us not be so carried away with hatred for Luther's bad writings that we lose the fruit of his good ones.

But, though this is the frankest confession of his own weakness ever made by Erasmus, it is not really so damaging to his character as are the endless apologies of his later life. A man who spent such a world of effort, unrelaxed for eighteen years, to explain and justify his action, can hardly have been very easy about it in his mind. Must we then cast into the vestibule of hell, with the angels who neither rebelled with Lucifer nor fought for God, but remained neutral and "for themselves,"[2] the man whose character, judged on other grounds, seems so fine, and whose services to the world were so distin-

[1] Allen, ep. 1218; July 5, 1521.

[2]
> quel cattivo coro
> Degli angeli che non furon rebelli,
> Nè fur fedeli a Dio, ma per sè foro.

Dante, *Inferno*, iii, 37 ff. The very words remind one of the description in the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, "Erasmus est homo pro se."

guished? Some opinion we must have, and this opinion will doubtless depend primarily on our conception of the rightness or wrongness of the humanist's treatment of the Reformation. A purely colorless narrative is virtually impossible, for the sources cannot be left "to speak for themselves"; the witness of each document must be cross-examined in the light of the whole history of the epoch, nay, of the whole of the historian's philosophy.

In the opinion of the present writer, Erasmus's attitude toward the Reformation was wrong, because the present writer thinks that the Reformation was justified in its purpose and on the whole good in its results. With all his faults and all his sins, Luther acted a nobler, more heroic, and also a historically more justifiable part than did Erasmus. Not only was he braver, but he was ultimately more right in his judgment of the requirements of the time and of the remedies suitable for restoring health and vitality to suffering Christendom.

But, having given the value-judgment that is unavoidable if history is to mean more than an idle tale, it is only just to add that, relatively, there is much to be said for Erasmus's view of the Reformation. At his age, in his position, with his interests, it is rather surprising that he should have been so open-minded as he showed himself, than that he should finally have turned aside from revolution. He saw, as we should be inexcusable not to see still more clearly, that in human parties all the good is never on one side; nor all the evil on the other. He had the rare, and, for its possessor's peace of mind, unlucky gift of seeing the weakness of his own side and the strength of his enemy. There was war in his own heart not between God and the devil, but between hosts of ideas, interests, and affections, of which some good and some evil ones seemed to fight on either side. What weighed with him most was his belief that he was finally consistent in championing the two causes of undogmatic piety and of sound culture. The two least creditable springs for his action—cowardice

and fear of losing his own leadership—were the two which had the least weight with him. Men's motives are often mixed, and with so complex a mind as that with which we are now dealing, this mixture is unusually intricate. To dissect that delicate tissue of nerves and brain, lancet and lens are needed. After splendid successes, to be matched with an issue too large for any save the greatest to master, to be cast at the age of fifty into a mighty revolution, to run into a terrific storm after a smooth voyage—in short, to be confronted with an opportunity and a peril almost unequalled in history—was the misfortune of the man. Even the best qualities of his mind, his tolerance, his pacifism, his ability to see both sides of every question, stood him in ill stead now. If he was wrong in his judgment of the supreme issue, he was right in his criticism of many details. Luther gave only too many handles to his enemies; all that was violent and coarse and crude in the man and still more in some of his followers, repelled the fastidious scholar, and kept him from the Protestant camp more effectually than did any fear for his own skin or his own laurels.

In January, 1521, Charles opened his first Diet, at Worms. Before that august body came many important questions, political, constitutional, financial, and foreign. But the supreme interest of contemporaries, as of posterity, has been concentrated on the Diet's dealing with Luther. Aleander proposed that he be condemned unheard, but the estates, after a stormy session, decided to summon him. He appeared before them on April 17th, and again on April 18th, refusing to retract aught of his doctrine.

Erasmus, invited to be present, declined, partly, as he explained, because he did not want to meddle with the religious question, partly because the plague had broken out in the crowded town.[1] Hoping, however, to exercise his influence in favor of moderation, he wrote to powerful

[1] To Laurinus, February 1, 1523; Lond. xxiii, 6, col. 1213; LB. ep. 650, col. 749.

men, among whom he mentions the Burgundian Chancellor Mercurino Gattinara, Cardinal Matthew Schinner, Aloysius Marlian, Bishop of Tuy, and an adviser of Chièvres, the Stadholder of the Netherlands. Marlian composed an oration against Luther, the temperate tone of which may have been due to Erasmus's advice. But as both he and Chièvres died of the plague at Worms nothing came of this effort.[1] Gattinara answered Erasmus's advances in a letter, reassuring him as to his own personal safety, but promising nothing for Luther.[2]

True to his expressed preference for "being a spectator rather than an actor of a drama,"[3] Erasmus spent the winter of 1520-21, while the earth trembled with the storm at Worms, in safety at Louvain and at Antwerp. One day, at the house of Peter Gilles, he dined with Albert Dürer, the celebrated Nuremberg painter, now on a trip to the Low Countries.[4] It was perhaps on this occasion that Dürer heard him say that he gave himself two more years in which to dare to do something.[5] The artist was in warm sympathy with the Reformation, as were other friends of the humanist. The local head of the movement, which almost reached the proportions of a revolt, was the Augustinian Prior James Probst, whom Erasmus called "a pure Christian who almost alone preaches Christ,"[6] and whom Aleander dubbed one of the men most dangerous to the Roman Church.[7] Another leader in the revolt from Rome was the humanist's warm friend, Cornelius Grapheus.[8]

[1] On Marlian, who died on the night of May 10-11, 1521, L. C., i, 421, note; on William de Croy, Seigneur de Chièvres, *ibid.*, ep. 341.

[2] Dated Worms, April 5, 1521. Allen, ep. 1197.

[3] LB. iii, 871 D.

[4] E. Heidrich: *Albrecht Dürers Schriftlicher Nachlass*, 1908, p. 82.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 100.

[6] Allen, ep. 980; L. C. ep. 155. May 30, 1519.

[7] Aleander to Cardinal de' Medici, October 13, 1520. Brieger: *Aleander und Luther*, 1886, p. 271. P. Kalkoff: *Anfänge der Gegenreformation in den Niederlanden*, 1903, i, 51 f. Dürer, pp. 77, 107. On Probst further, Allen, ep. 980, line 54, note; Marcel Godet: *La Congrégation de Montaigu*, 1912, p. 189; O. Clemen: *Beiträge zur Reformationsgeschichte*, i, 37 ff; Enders, vii, 92.

[8] Dürer, p. 111.

ANTWERP IN 1520

From a sketch by Albert Dürer. Original in the Albertina, Vienna

Erasmus probably took little part in this agitation. He was daily becoming more irritated against a man who "acted as if he wished to perish." On May 10th he wrote a long letter to Jonas,[1] explaining that Luther, who at first had his favor, had gradually alienated good men by his passion, by his railing against the pope, against the friars, against the universities, and against Aristotle's philosophy. Luther, he says, would have done better to have thrown himself on the mercy of pope and emperor. Though there is some slight resemblance between the words used by the Wittenberg professor and those used by Erasmus, the latter explains that there is a world of difference in their meaning and tone. His own ideal of a reform and of reformers was further set forth, for the benefit of the same correspondent, in a long epistle containing the lives of Vitrier and Colet.[2]

On April 26th Luther left Worms. While returning home, on the afternoon of May 4th, he was seized with friendly violence by retainers of the Elector Frederic, and borne away to the Wartburg, a fine castle near Eisenach, to hide from the ban until the storm should blow over. Wild rumors of his assassination, as well as of his flight to Bohemia or to Sickingen, flew through Germany. On May 17th the news reached Antwerp, where Dürer heard it and recorded in his diary a long lamentation for the untimely end of the "inspired man of God." "O Erasmus of Rotterdam," he continues, "where wilt thou abide? O thou Knight of Christ, seize the martyr's crown."[3] But this was an honor for which the gentle scholar had no ambition, at least in this cause. "I should wish to be a martyr for Christ," he said, "had I the strength; but not for Luther."[4] To Richard Pace

[1] Allen, ep. 1202; L. C. ep. 477; G. Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas*, no. 50.

[2] Allen, ep. 1211.

[3] *Dürers Schriftlicher Nachlass*, pp. 95 ff. Erasmus speaks of the rumor of Luther's assassination on July 5th. Allen, ep. 1221.

[4] LB. x, 663. "Spongia," 1523.

he wrote on July 5th,[1] saying that the Germans wish to drag him into the affair, but that their foolish plan is more likely to alienate him. What help could he give the bold innovator if he tried to share his danger, save that two would perish instead of one?

Erasmus had indeed some cause to be anxious. On May 6th Aleander published the bull *Decet Pontificem Romanum*, placing Luther under the ban of the Church. On May 26th the emperor signed the Edict of Worms, putting him under the ban of the Empire, commanding his books to be burned and his person to be delivered up to the authorities. Shortly afterward Charles and Aleander returned to the Netherlands, where they proceeded at once to carry out their program of stamping out heresy. In the autumn Probst and Grapheus were arrested at Antwerp,[2] and it was perhaps the fear of the inquisitor that sent Dürer back to Nuremberg.[3]

Finding Antwerp too hot to hold him, Erasmus retired to Anderlecht, a small town near Brussels, where he spent most of the summer and early autumn. On his occasional visits to the capital he was well received by distinguished men. Among others he saw the king of Denmark, Christian II, now on a visit to his brother-in-law, the emperor, in order to collect his wife's dowry. The king was decidedly favorable to Luther, and answered the humanist's objections to the violent course things were taking by asserting that efficacious medicines always put the whole body into convulsions before they could cure.[4] For his own part, Erasmus feared that,

[1] Allen, ep. 1281.

[2] Kalkoff: *Anfänge*, pp. 61–70.

[3] Kalkoff, *ibid.*, and on Dürer on *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, xx, 1897. Dürer himself only says that he had declined the offer of a house and pension from the city of Antwerp. *Schriftlicher Nachlass*, p. 178. Before he left he intrusted his possessions to Luther's warm friend, Wencelaus Link, *ibid*, p. 114.

[4] LB. ep. 509, 650; Lond. ep. xxiii, 6, col. 1214. Both 1523. Dürer mentions a banquet given by the king to the emperor on July 2d, and one given by Charles to Christian on July 4th. *Schriftlicher Nachlass*, pp. 114 f. It was perhaps here that Erasmus met him.

though a powerful drug might be necessary to restore the collapsed morals of the Church, yet that this medicine, applied without sufficient skill, would rather exacerbate than expel the disease. The Apple of Discord had been thrown into the world, no part of which was now at peace.

The parting of the ways had now come; one must be either with the Reform or against it. Erasmus's continued efforts to keep on good terms with both sides only brought him the ill will of both. As Zasius, the jurisconsult of Freiburg and a friend of the humanist, wrote to Boniface Amerbach, Erasmus's letters on Luther caused him to be ill spoken of even by the most devoted Erasmians.[1] For his own part, Zasius protests, he esteemed the prudent and holy writings of Erasmus all the more by contrast with the insane ravings of Luther.[2]

In order to disabuse the public of the idea that he had any part or lot with Luther, while at the same time putting in a word wherever possible in favor of moderation, Erasmus continued throughout the summer to write to powerful friends. To Peter Barbier he confessed that "he so hated discord that even truth, if seditious, would displease him, and that he had not written against Luther only because he had not had time to study the question thoroughly, and that to write against a man should be something more than to call him names.[3] To Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, he protested that he would write something for the peace of the Church when he had time.[4]

To his enemies at Louvain he designed to send the most elaborate apology of all.[5] At the same time, urged on by many men in power, he began a dialogue *On Ending the Lutheran Affair*, which, however, was soon interrupted by ill health, as he says, or, more probably, by prudence.[6]

[1] July 15, 1521. *Udalrici Zasii epistolæ*, ed. J. A. Riegger, 1774, i, 47.
[2] To Amerbach, August 20, 1521, *ibid*, p. 49.
[3] Louvain, August 13, 1521. Allen, ep. 1225.
[4] Bruges, August 23, 1521. Allen, ep. 1228.
[5] Anderlecht, 1521; Allen, ep. 1217.
[6] To Glapion, Basle, 1522, Lond. xix, 10; LB. ep. 645.

The scheme of the book, related elsewhere, was to consist of three conversations between Thrasymachus, representing Luther, Eubulus the Catholic, and Philalethes the arbiter—*i.e.*, Erasmus himself. The first conversation was to consider Luther's manner, which was designated as objectionable even if all he said were true; the second was planned to discuss some of his doctrines, and the third designed to show the path toward peace.[1] He even wrote to Bombasius[2] at Rome, asking him to get permission from the pope to read Luther's works; this Aleander had refused.

All the while Erasmus was keenly sensible of his danger. Among the men he feared most was John Glapion, a Franciscan of Bruges recently appointed confessor to the emperor. Whether, as Hutten charged,[3] Glapion's attempt to mediate at the Diet of Worms was due to the influence of Erasmus, cannot certainly be told, but soon after that he entered into communication with the humanist with the purpose of making him arbiter of the whole cause. "I know that *he* acted with friendly mind," wrote Erasmus much later, "but others tried to force the plan upon me because they suspected me, though unjustly. They wished either to make me the hangman of those whom they thought I favored, or else to make me betray myself into their nets."[4] The plan, however, such as it was, fell through. Glapion tried hard to get an interview during the summer, but failed. Erasmus says that he was so willing to meet him that he actually started to return to the Netherlands after he had gone

[1] *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, 1523. Allen, i. p. 34 f.

[2] September 23, 1521, Allen, ep. 1236.

[3] LB. x, 1647; "Spongia," 1523. At Worms Glapion had met Hutten, Bucer, and Spalatin, and had tried to prevent Luther's coming to the city by proposing that all should be smoothed over if Luther would only retract a few articles. On this see L. C. epp. 407, 440, 444, 445; P. Kalkoff: *Aleander gegen Luther*, p. 156; P. Smith: *Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, pp. 11 f; Köstlin-Kawerau: *Luthers Leben*, 1903. i, 388, 408; Förstemann: *Neues Urkundenbuch*, pp. 36–54.

[4] To Olaus, April 19, 1533. Förstemann und Günther: *Briefe an Erasmus*, 1904, p. 348. The same, dated February 19, 1533, in *Oláh Miklós Levelezése;* közli Ipolyi Arnold. *Monumenta Hungariæ diplomatica*, xxv, 1875, p. 351.

to Basle, in order to see the confessor at Calais, but that ill health forced him to return after he had reached Schlettstadt.[1] He continued to write[2] to him until Glapion's death, in September, 1522, cut short further intercourse. Before this happened, however, Erasmus had already begun to feel terribly uneasy at the course things were taking. "Before Cæsar left for Spain," he wrote much later, "I felt that there was a movement on foot to put me at the head of the growing Lutheran party; and I confess that I left that province [Brabant] because I dared not trust Glapion, although he wrote often and courteously."[3] At the same time he told Zwingli that he was obliged to leave so as not to get involved with the Pharisees.[4]

To Glapion himself he wrote that he would have preferred to have remained at Anderlecht had the emperor been able to protect him against those who, under pretext of religion, went about to avenge their own slights.[5] Among these by far the most dangerous was Aleander, now raging around the Netherlands, privately denouncing Erasmus, in dispatches to Rome, as a worse heretic than Luther,[6] and as the agitator arousing all Germany to rebellion and spreading the idea that the bull *Exsurge* was forged.[7] Aleander knew and disliked the *Advice of One Seeking the Peace of the Church*;[8] and he insinuated, on the ground of a slight stylistic resemblance, that the humanist was the author of the *Babylonian Captivity*.[9]

[1] To P. Barbier (1522), Lond. xx, 40; LB. ep. 644.

[2] To Glapion, Basle, 1522, Lond. xix, 110; LB. ep. 645.

[3] Erasmus to Maldonato, March 30, 1527. *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, xxix, 1859, p. 610.

[4] August 31, 1523, *Zwinglii Opera*, ed. Egli etc., viii, 115.

[5] To Glapion, Lond. xix, 110; LB. ep. 645.

[6] P. Kalkoff: *Aleander gegen Luther*, pp. 59, 74; letters of December 18, 1520, and of February 6, 1521.

[7] J. Paquier: *Lettres familières de Jérôme Aléandre*, 1910, p. 61; Aleander to Cardinal Pucci, October 24, 1520.

[8] Kalkoff: *Aleander*, p. 80.

[9] Erasmus to Bombasius, September 23, 1521; Allen, ep. 1236. The *Babylonian Captivity* began with the words "Velim nolim," and Erasmus's *Panegyric of Philip* with the words "Velis nolis."

This charge almost drove Erasmus wild, as did the reports he heard of Aleander's savage defamation of him to the emperor and others in power,[1] especially the Bishop of Liège. The tricky Italian, however, judged it expedient to keep all this enmity as secret as possible, and even complained, with crocodile tears, to friends of the humanist,[2] that, in spite of the wrongs he had suffered at his hands, he could not forget his ancient love for the scholar.

With far more reason Erasmus also felt compelled to dissemble his fear and hatred of the legate. Though he knew him to be proud, fierce, irritable, insatiate of glory, and bent upon his ruin,[3] he spoke to Capito of this man in a friendly way, in order that Capito might use his good offices with the legate.[4] In order to forestall him Erasmus wrote to powerful friends at Rome and received a gracious reply from Leo, dated January 15, 1521, expressing pleasure in the humanist's assurances of loyalty, which the pope had begun to doubt, not so much by reason of the reports of others, as because of certain of his own writings.[5] At the same time strict instructions were sent by Cardinal de' Medici to Aleander to treat the humanist with the utmost consideration.[6]

Distrusting these professions, however, and even hearing a report, probably false, that a reward had been offered to anyone who would capture him and send him bound to Rome,[7] he prepared to leave the Netherlands. While spending some days at Louvain in order to pack,

[1] Erasmus to Aleander, September 2, 1524; LB. ep. 693.

[2] Vives to Erasmus, Louvain, January 19, 1522. LB. ep. 615. *Vivis Opera*, 1782, vii, 159.

[3] So Erasmus wrote Pirckheimer, March 30, 1522, LB. ep. 618.

[4] Capito to Aleander, March 29, 1521; P. Kalkoff: *Capito im Dienste Albrechts von Mainz*, 1908, p. 135.

[5] Lämmer: *Monumenta Vaticana*, 1861, p. 3; Jortin: *Life of Erasmus*, ii, 398. Allen, ep. 1180.

[6] Balan: *Monumenta Reformationis Lutheranæ*, no. 53, pp. 129 f; Pastor-Kerr, viii, 257.

[7] Boniface Amerbach to Alciat, 1521; Burckhardt-Biedermann: *Bon. Amerbach und die Reformation*, pp. 20, 150.

he met Aleander, on Sunday, October 26, 1521, at the Inn of the Wild Man and had a long conversation in which mortal hatred on both sides was masked under a show of courtesy and even of old friendship.[1] Indeed, while more than one evening was thus spent in apparently amicable chat, many subjects of discourse were brought up, the pleasantest of which was the news, communicated by the legate, that Pirckheimer, recently smitten by the ban of excommunication, had submitted and had been absolved by special breve of the pope.[2] After this smooth introduction the talk soon fell upon rapids and whirlpools, when the subject of Erasmus's own position was broached. Aleander not only pointed out objectionable passages in the humanist's acknowledged writings, and demanded recantation, but accused him of writing several anonymous pamphlets—as, of course, he had done—and thus threw him into "mortal confusion."[3] Contemporary gossip reported[4] that when the nuncio offered the humanist a fat bishopric if he would write against the heretic, he had replied: "Luther is too great for me to write against. . . . I learn more from reading one page of his books than from the whole of Aquinas." The cautious Dutchman would certainly never have expressed himself thus bluntly before a wily opponent, but the report that he admired Luther's exegesis was very persistent,[5] and the offer of

[1] To Laurinus, Lond. xxiii, 5, col. 1214; LB. ep. 650; Paquier: *Humanisme et Réforme*, pp. 280 ff. Allen, iv, 591.

[2] November 29, 1521, Erasmus to Pirckheimer. Allen, ep. 1244. To Pirckheimer, January 26, 1521, Allen, ep. 1282.

[3] Aleander to Sanga, Brussels, December 30, 1531, in Lämmer: *Monumenta Vaticana*, 1861, p. 93; *cf.* Pastor-Antrobus, v, 423.

[4] "Narratio per Henricum Priorem Gundensem," *Lutheri Opera latina varii argumenti* (Erlangen), v, 249. This was attributed to Œcolampadius, see *Œcolampadii judicium de M. Luthero*, sine loco et anno (British Museum); Hübmaier sent this to Beatus Rhenanus, in an undated letter published in *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, no. 192. It has been conjectured that the name Henricus Prior Gundensis concealed a double authorship, referring to Henry of Zütphen and Melchior Miritzsch, Prior of the Augustinian convent at Ghent. *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1920–21, p. 289 f.

[5] Melanchthon, in *Corpus Reformatorum*, v. 74.

the bishopric is intrinsically probable and is testified by certain expressions of his own. But Aleander did not disdain threats, observing that the pope, who often destroyed counts and dukes, could easily destroy some lousy men of letters, and could even treat the emperor as a cobbler.[1]

Notwithstanding the apparent friendliness of the legate Erasmus continued to believe, and to write to his friends, that the latter was going about to traduce and to destroy him.[2] He was also much alarmed at the arrest of a heretic at Antwerp, who, on being examined at Brussels, implicated him in aiding and abetting the illicit sale of Lutheran books.[3] He therefore decided to leave at once, and put himself under the protection of Francis von Sickingen, now captain of the army on the Meuse, with whom he spent his birthday, October 28th, at Brussels.[4] Under his powerful shield, he made his way up the Rhine, arriving at Basle on November 15th.[5] Meeting Capito at Mainz, he learned that this old ally had been negotiating with Luther in hopes of patching up a truce between him and the Church, and especially between him and the Archbishop of Mainz, a wily Hohenzollern who did his best to run with the hare and to hunt with the hounds at the same time. As Capito's efforts were not kindly received by the Reformer, on October 14th he wrote Erasmus for instructions.[6] The Lutherans, he said, were both curious and insolent, and boasted that they had Erasmus's support. The

[1] A. Lauchert: *Die Italienischen literarischen Gegner Luthers*, 1912, p. 299 f.

[2] Lond. xx, 40; LB. ep. 644; Erasmus to Choler, 1531, Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, i, no. 18, and a letter to Wolsey published by A. Meyer: *Les Relations d'Érasme et de Luther*, 1909, p. 163.

[3] Vives to Erasmus, April 1, 1522; LB. ep. 619; *Vivis Opera*, vii, 164.

[4] Lond. xxiii, 6, and xx, 40; LB. epp. 644, 650. H. Ulmann: *Franz von Sickingen*, 1872, p. 226.

[5] Allen, iv., 598 ff; *Vadianische Briefsammlung*, ii, no. 292.

[6] Capito to Erasmus, October 14, 1521. Allen, ep. 1241. The letter is unfortunately badly mutilated. As it was first published by Merula in 1607 from a MS. now lost, there is little hope of restoring its contents, which would certainly be most interesting. *Cf.* L.C. ii, p. 56 n.

humanist's answer was probably given in the interview at Mainz, early in November, but what it was can only be inferred from the sequel and from his growing coldness to the evangelical cause.

It was probably this very effort of Capito and Erasmus to induce Luther to write more gently that finally alienated him altogether. When he left Worms for the Wartburg he still had the highest hopes of the great humanist. In a letter to Spalatin of May 14th he referred with approval to the *Consilium cujusdam*, which he attributed to Erasmus.[1] Again in the preface to his work against Latomus (June, 1521), the Louvain professor who had previously attacked Erasmus, Luther refers to Latomus as Ishbi-benob, the giant Philistine who thought to slay David, and to Erasmus as Abishai, who defended the man of God, "and," he adds, "this Ishbi-benob yields to the might of our Abishai."[2]

The next reference,[3] in September, shows an entire change of attitude, and hints at the cause of it:

> The judgment of neither Capito nor Erasmus moves me in the least. They accomplish nothing, but they make me fear that I shall sometime have trouble with one or the other of them, since I see that Erasmus is far from the knowledge of grace, as one who looks not at the cross, but at peace in all his writings. For this reason he thinks that all can be accomplished with civility and benevolence, but Behemoth[4] does not care for such treatment, nor does he amend himself in the least on account of it.

[1] So at least I interpret the reference to "Erasmi bule" (*βουλή*) which puzzled Enders, though Luther's reading of the *Consilium*, "that Erasmus said the people would no longer bear the yoke of the pope," is somewhat strained. Enders, iii, 153, L. C. ep. 483.

[2] *Rationis Latomianæ Confutatio. Werke* (Weimar), viii, 36, and De Wette, ii, 18.

[3] Enders, iii, 229. L. C. ep. 506. *Cf.* Richter, 30-32. 'There is an undated letter from Capito to Luther (Enders, iii, 238) exhorting him to mildness, put by Enders in October. I should be inclined to put it in September. Capito was at Wittenberg on September 30th, to consult with Melanchthon and Jonas on the way to prevent Luther attacking Albert of Mayence. *Archiv für Reformationsgesch.*, vi, 172, 178 (1910). *Cf.* letter of Ulscenius to Capito, October 21st, *ibid.*, 206.

[4] Job, xl:15. Luther's favorite expression for Satan, following Jerome.

The breach was made complete by the publication of the *Epistolæ ad diversos*, in November, 1521. This was intended to correct the indiscretions of the last collection of letters (the *Farrago* of 1519), and to give the impression that the Dutch scholar stood entirely aloof from the combat. None of the letters here published are favorable to the Reformers, and many protest that the writer had nothing to do with Wittenberg, but is still a true son of Rome. He himself feared[1] that it would excite the hatred of the Reformers, and he was right. Luther saw the volume a few months after it was published and wrote Spalatin: "In this book of letters Erasmus now at length shows that he is the hearty enemy of Luther and his doctrine though with wily words he pretends to be a friend."[2]

[1] Lond. xxi, 16. LB. ep. 624.
[2] Enders, iii, 360.

CHAPTER X

LIFE AT BASLE 1521-29

RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND ENGLAND

AFTER his return to Basle, on November 15, 1521, Erasmus lived for ten months with Froben, paying 150 gulden for his board.[1] He was sensitive lest it be thought that he lived on Froben's bounty, a rumor which he took pains to deny, though acknowledging the constant kindness of his friend the publisher.[2] In September, 1522, he took up his residence in a separate house. His life was so little private that he said of it that the veil of the temple was rent in twain and the most sacred secrets of the confessional published abroad.[3] At this time he speaks of his annual income as a little more than four hundred gulden,[4] which, by the way, was equal to the salary of a professor at the leading German and English universities.

As there was no general copyright, he received comparatively little for his manuscripts, which to-day would have made him a rich man. Nevertheless, an author's good will was worth something to the publisher, and the humanist showed himself a good business man in exploiting this. Doubtless one chief reason for the noticeable fact that every new edition of each work differed somewhat from the last was to give the publisher and author the benefit to be derived from the desire of readers for

[1] December 16, 1524. Lond. xx, 24. LB. ep. 719. A gulden was intrinsically worth fifty-six cents. Erasmus therefore paid eighty-four dollars, worth at that time ten times as much in purchasing power as now.

[2] *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, Allen, i, pp. 40-45.

[3] Lond. xx, 24. LB. ep. 719.

[4] Allen, i, 42 ff.

the latest thing. For, even without copyright, the first publisher had a considerable advantage in being able to sell before a rival would have time to reprint. The competition was extraordinarily keen. During the author's lifetime the *Folly* was printed in nine different cities, and in each of two of them, Venice and Cologne, by three separate publishers. The New Testament was printed by seven publishers at Basle alone.[1] What Erasmus got for each of these printings is not known; doubtless he got nothing for most of them. For first editions, however, or for emended and enlarged editions, he received something; thus, Josse Bade, the great printer of Paris, offered him, in 1512, fifteen florins for the new edition of the *Adages* and a like sum for the intended edition of Jerome, and apologized for the smallness of the honoraria. If the florin meant was the gold coin of that name, as is probable, the offer would amount to about thirty-four dollars, or seven pounds, for each manuscript, at a time when money had ten times the purchasing power that it has now.[2]

Such rewards, even eked out with special fees for odd jobs like writing epitaphs[3] and panegyrics to order, would have furnished a sorry support to the man of letters, had they not been supplemented by extremely handsome gifts and pensions from powerful and wealthy patrons. The annuity granted by the emperor caused its recipient enormous trouble, remaining in arrears or in abeyance for years together, partly on account of the chronic disorder of the imperial finances, partly because of the rascality of the agent employed, in this case one Peter Barbier.[4] In 1533, Duke John of Cleves-Jülich

[1] L. Enthoven: "Ueber Druck und Vertrieb Erasmischer Werke," *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum &c.*, xxviii, 1911, pp. 33–59.

[2] Allen, epp. 263, 264, 283.

[3] On writing an epitaph for Lady Margaret, on December 28, 1512, see C. H. Cowper: *Memoir of Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby*, ed. J. E. B. Mayer, 1874, pp. 124, 200.

[4] Peter Barbier to Erasmus, November 1, 1529, Enthoven, no. 77; Barbier to Erasmus, July 9, 1533, Förstemann-Günther, no. 189. Erasmus to Decius

made a grant of thirty gold gulden per annum, which was apparently regularly paid.[1] So, throughout life, was the English annuity, though Erasmus feared that the death of Warham, on August 22, 1532, would interrupt it.[2] Such, however, was not the case, for Archbishop Cranmer continued to pay it, and other English patrons lavished handsome presents upon the distinguished scholar, among them Thomas Cromwell and the Bishop of Lincoln.[3] Other valuable gifts mentioned were one hundred and fifty Rhenish gulden (two hundred dollars) from Ferdinand and fifty from the Cardinal of Trent;[4] two horses, a pacer and a trotter, from Christopher von Stadion, Bishop of Augsburg,[5] three hundred florins, with an invitation to visit Brabant from the emperor, Maria the Regent, and the chancellor,[6] and an unspecified sum from Dantiscus, a Polish bishop.[7] Doubtless there were many other such perquisites of which we know nothing.[8]

Erasmus frequently complained that his income was too small for his position, and to one with so many noble

August 22, 1534, Miaskowski: *Erasmiana*, no. 36; To A. Fugger, July 7, 1529, Lond. xxiii, 14, LB. no. 1064. Erasmus complained that Barbier had robbed him once of one hundred florins and that the pension remained seven whole years unpaid.

[1] Duke William's note of thanks for Erasmus's "foetura," November 10, 1529, ed. F. Wachter: *Zeitschrift des Bergischen Geschichtsvereins*, xxx, 1894, p. 201; Pension from Duke John, April 20, 1533, Vischer: *Erasmiana*, no. 6, with note in Erasmus's hand that it was paid at the Feast of John the Baptist (June 24), 1533, Förstemann-Günther, no. 183.

[2] Erasmus speaks of this and of his fears in letters to Tomicki, March 10, 1533, Miaskowski: *Jahrbuch für Philosophie*, 1900, p. 323, and in a letter to Amerbach, published in *Epistolæ ad Bon. Amerbachium*, no. 64, April 21, 1532 (not 1531).

[3] Gerard Phrysius forwarded thirty pounds from Cranmer, June 8, 1533, Förstemann-Günther, no. 187; *cf.* Erasmus to Decius, August 22, 1534, Miaskowski, p. 333. In 1535 T. Bedill, Warham's old secretary, forwarded twenty angels from Cromwell, eighteen from Cranmer, and fifteen from the Bishop of Lincoln, Enthoven, no. 138. Lond. xxvii, 51; LB. ep. 1296. A letter of March 12, 1536, speaks of delay in paying the English pension, *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, x, no. 478.

[4] From J. Löble, May 11, 1533, Förstemann-Günther, no. 184.

[5] From Stadion, August 8, 1533, *ibid.*, no. 191.

[6] To More, October 12, 1533, Lond. xxvii, 45; LB. ep. 1256.

[7] Miaskowski: *Erasmiana*, no. 36.

[8] A list of some other known gifts, however, in Förstemann-Günther, p. 345.

and royal friends it must have seemed narrow. Nevertheless, he was able to live in comfort, with good wine, horses, and servants, and above all with a good library. In 1525 he raised money by selling this, reserving the right to use it during his lifetime. The purchaser was John Laski, nephew of the famous Bishop of Gnesen of the same name, a baron of Siegratz in Poland. The family had stood in friendly relations with the scholar ever since two of the brothers, Hieroslaus and Stanislaus, paid him a visit in 1523.[1] The contract of sale, which is not uninteresting, reads as follows:[2]

BASLE, *June 20, 1525.*

I, Erasmus of Rotterdam, have sold my library to the illustrious Polish Baron, John Laski, for three hundred crowns [two hundred dollars] on condition that as long as I live the use of the books may amicably be allowed to me as well as to him, but that they shall permanently belong to him and to his heirs. As a pledge he has an inventory of the books. All additions to the library shall belong to him, except future purchases of high-priced manuscripts, for which a special agreement must be made. In witness whereof I, Erasmus, have written this with my own hand and affixed the seal of my ring representing Terminus.

Half the price was paid on the spot; the other half after the owner's death to his heirs. On March 21, 1533, Erasmus wrote Laski that the library was now worth one hundred florins more than it was when he sold it, and offering to give back the price and get another purchaser.[3] This, however, was not done, for on March 5, 1534, he wrote again that he left the library at Laski's disposal.[4] After the second half of the money had been paid, on November 12, 1536, to Boniface Amerbach, the books were sent in three boxes on January 11, 1538,[5]

[1] Casimir von Miaskowski: *Der Briefwechsel des Erasmus mit Polen*, 1901, p. 44.

[2] Burigny: *Vie d'Érasme*, 1757, ii, 442; Miaskowski: "Erasmiana," *Jahrbücher für Philosophie*, vol. xv, p. 105, no. 2 (1901).

[3] Miaskowski: *Erasmiana*, no. 31.

[4] *Ibid.*, no. 34.

[5] *Ibid.*, no. 44.

and reached the Polish baron on April 5th.[1] They later came into the hands of John Egolph of Kröningen and in 1573 passed to the University of Ingolstadt, now the University of Munich.[2]

On January 22, 1527, Erasmus drew up his will.[3] He made Boniface Amerbach his trustee; the executors were to be Basil Amerbach, Beatus Rhenanus, and Jerome Froben. Boniface was to receive his rings, his spoon of pure gold, and the golden double cup given by Duke George. Henry Glarean, Louis Ber, Basil Amerbach, Jerome and John Froben, Sigismund Gelen, Froben's proof-reader, Botzheim, and Conrad Goclen, were all remembered with tokens. The fact of the library being sold to John Laski was noted. Arrangements were made for Froben to print a complete edition of the works, according to the plan laid down in the *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, a provision afterward carried out. The editions of Jerome, Hilary, and other fathers were not to be included in the works if inconvenient. The editors were to be Glarean, Goclen, Rhenanus, the two Amerbachs, and Sigismund Gelen. If any refused to act, the trustee might appoint others. A copy of the works was to be sent to Warham, to Tunstall, to More, to Longland, Bishop of Lincoln; to Queen's College, Cambridge; to Fisher, to the Royal Library in Spain, to Wm. Croy, Bishop of Toledo; to Ferdinand, to Bernard von Cles, Bishop of Trent; to Baptista Egnatius, to the Collegium Trilingue at Louvain, to the College of the Lily at Louvain, to the college to be founded by Coutrell at Tournay, to Francis Craneveld, Senator of the Town Council of Mechlin; to the Abbot of St. Bavon at Ghent, to Marcus Laurinus for the library of the College of St. Donatian at Bruges, of which he was dean; to Nicolas

[1] *Ibid.*, no. 43, dated April 5, 1537, presumably meaning 1537–38. Interesting details of the transportation of the library in a letter of A. Fritsch to Boniface Amerbach in *Pamietnik Literacki*, Lemberg, 1905, p. 512.

[2] Förstemann-Günther, p. 345.

[3] Published by J. B. Kan: *Erasmiana*, 1891, p. 6 ff. Also by S. Sieber: *Das Testament von Erasmus*, 1889, with other documents.

Everard, President of the Estates of Holland, or to his successor; to Hermann Lethmaat, and to the library of the monastery at Egmond. A servant, Quirinus, was remembered with a legacy of two hundred gulden. Directions for a funeral neither sordid nor pretentious completed the document.

Although Erasmus joked about his testament, saying that he was in the same condition as the poor priest of Louvain who made a will in these terms, "I have nothing; I owe much; the rest I give to the poor,"[1] yet the inventory attached to his will, dated April 10, 1534,[2] shows that he possessed a large number of gold and silver vessels and ornaments given him by distinguished persons, as well as a good outfit of furniture, clothes, and household utensils. Among the patrons who had given him gold clocks, cups, spoons, or other handsome articles, were mentioned Christopher von Scheidlowitz, the Archbishop of Mainz, William Mountjoy, Anthony Fugger, Julius Pflug, Damian a Goes, Pirckheimer, the Laskis, and several other prelates and noblemen. He also enumerates his cloths, napkins, silk mantles, gowns, hose, collars, twenty-four shirts, towels, feather beds, cushions, parlor rugs, tapestries, kitchen utensils, forks, a hammer, an egg-beater (*cochleare spumarium*), candle snuffers, boxes for spices, axes, iron trunks, a mirror, a shaving set, a purse, rings, five beds, couches, and curtains, as well as tongs, an ear probe, and other instruments.

Erasmus took extraordinary pains to get legal sanction for his will. On July 8, 1525, he had received permission from Pope Clement VII to leave his property as he wished; he thrice got similar permission from the tribunals at Basle,[3] and once a diploma to the same effect

[1] To Ber, January 26, 1527; L. C. ep. 752; original first published *ibid.* ii, p. 532 f.

[2] L. Sieber: *Das Mobiliar des Erasmus*, 1891, and Kan: *Erasmiana*, 1891.

[3] Clement's breve, and two of the Basle permissions, dated January 24, 1527, and June 13, 1527, in Sieber: *Das Testament des Erasmus*, the third permission mentioned in a letter to Amerbach, January 15th, no date, *Epistolæ ad Amerbachium*, no. 17

from Ferdinand to the Town Council of Freiburg.[1] He also speaks of a similar diploma from the emperor.[2] Twice he altered his will in details, while leaving the main provisions as to the trusteeship intact, once on June 5, 1535, and once on January 22, 1536.[3] The will was probated on January 11, 1538,[4] when his property was estimated at the sum of seven thousand gulden ($3,920), besides a fine lot of cups.

For seven and a half years Erasmus made Basle his headquarters. From here, however, his restless spirit ever urged him to make visits to neighboring cities. In September, 1522, with two companions, Henry von Eppendorf and Beatus Rhenanus, he visited another devoted friend, John Botzheim, a Canon of Constance, whose house was a center of hospitality for men of arts and letters. His excuse was an invitation to visit Rome, but if he ever seriously entertained the idea of continuing the journey south, an attack of illness prevented him. In a fascinating letter[5] he described his reception and experiences at Constance.

Botzheim's house might seem the home of the Muses; there is no spot in it without some beauty or some elegance; it is never silent, but always alluring to the eyes of men because of its speaking pictures. In the summer court, where, as he said, he had just prepared a table for me, stood Paul, teaching the people. On another wall Christ sat on the mountain, teaching his disciples, while the apostles set out across the hills to publish the gospel. Along the smoke closet[6] sat the priests, scribes, and Pharisees, with the elders, conspiring against the already waxing gospel. Elsewhere the nine sisters of Apollo sang; and the naked Graces, true symbol of simple benevolence and friend-

[1] Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, iii, p. 775. (*Sitzungsberichte der K. K. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien*, vol. 108, 1885).

[2] *Epistolæ ad Amerbachium*, no. 17.

[3] Mentioned by Siedler: *Das Testament des Erasmus.*

[4] Miaskowski: *Erasmiana*, no. 44.

[5] To M. Laurinus, February 1, 1523; Lond. xxiii, 6; LB. ep. 650. On the date, *Zwinglis Werke*, vii, 584. *Cf.* further, K. Hartfelder: "Der humanistische Freundenkreis des Erasmus in Konstanz," *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, viii, 1893, pp. 24 ff. K. Walchner: *J. von Botzheim*, 1836, pp. 29 ff.

[6] *I.e.*, for ripening wine, or smoking meat.

ship, were seen. But why should I, in this letter, continue to depict the whole house, the splendors and delights of which you could hardly examine in ten days? But in all that house, everywhere so lovely, nothing is lovelier than the host himself. He has the Muses and Graces more in his breast than in his pictures, more in his manners than on his walls. . . .

I became so ill that I made neither my friends nor myself happy; otherwise, nothing was lacking to the greatest pleasure. Good heavens! what a hospice, what a host, what handsome attendants, what magnificence, what plays, what readings, what songs! O banquets and feasts of the gods! I should not have envied the gods of the poets their nectar and ambrosia had my health been a little better. The situation of the place itself is pleasing. Hard by is the wonderfully beautiful lake of Constance, stretching many miles in either direction and always lovely. The wooded mountains showing themselves everywhere, some afar, some near by, add charm to the scene. For there the Rhine, as though wearied with his journey through the rough and rugged Alps, refreshes himself as it were in a pleasant inn, and, slipping softly through the middle of the lake, recovers at Constance his channel and his name together, for the lake prefers to owe its name to the city. . . . It is said to be well stocked with fish, and of an incredible depth, so that the deepest part measures a hundred cubits. For they say that huge mountains are covered by this lake. The Dominican prior, a good and learned man, especially eloquent in preaching, gave us from the lake an enormous fish, which the vulgar call a trout,[1] a gift worthy of a king in our country.

The Rhine, leaving the lake to the right, slowly flows past the city of Constance, and as though in wanton play makes an island occupied by a fine convent of nuns; soon gathering itself together it makes a smaller lake which, for some unknown reason, is called Venetus.[2] From this it rolls on in an even bed, somewhat eddying but nevertheless navigable, to the town, formerly an imperial residence, called Schiffhausen,[3] probably on account of the ferry there situated before there was a bridge. Not far away are some cataracts through which the Rhine rushes with a great noise; and as it is broken elsewhere frequently by cataracts and rocks it is unfit for navigation until it gets to Basle.

But now my story must get back to Constance, which is famous

[1] "Quam Trottom appellat vulgus"; the ordinary German name is "Forelle." They are delicious.

[2] Now called the Unter-See.

[3] Now Schaffhausen. Erasmus derived the name from the German words for "ship" and "houses." In the local dialect it is still called Schafusa, with the first vowel obscure and a strong accent on the second.

for nothing more than for its ancient and by no means ugly cathedral. It is also famous for the Council held there of old under the presidency of the emperor, and most of all for the burning of Huss. . . . We spent there almost three weeks.

Within a few months after his return home Erasmus was off again to visit Besançon, at that time[1] an Imperial Free City. Invited by Feric Carondelet, brother of the Archbishop of Palermo, he enjoyed the Burgundian wine, which he believed very wholesome to the stomach. "O Burgundy," he cried, "worthy to be called mother of men, since you have such milk in your breasts!"[2] His visit, however, was marred by another illness, and by sinister rumors circulated by the Lutherans, angry at his recent polemic against Hutten.[3]

Another little trip that Erasmus made about this time was to Freiburg in the Breisgau, at the invitation of his friend Ulrich Zasius, one of the most famous jurisconsults of the day and professor of law in the university of that town. Their acquaintance had begun in 1514, with a respectful letter from Zasius to the "great Rotterdamer."[4] In the next year the jurist invited Amerbach and Erasmus to his daughter's wedding,[5] and the friendship thus pleasantly begun lasted until the death of Zasius, for whom the humanist wrote an epitaph.[6] Zasius was one of those who wrote against Lee.[7] Of his friend he wrote to Boniface Amerbach, on June 5, 1521, "How shall I not exult about Erasmus, who to me is the image—I will not say of great Apollo, but of a great Divinity?"[8]

[1] Until 1668.

[2] LB. ep. 650, col. 756.

[3] To Pirckheimer, June 3, 1521, Lond. xxx, 37; LB. App. ep. 327; To Noel Beda, 1525 (1524?), Lond. xix, 97; LB. ep. 784. To Pirckheimer, July 21, 1524, Lond. xxx, 36; LB. ep. 684.

[4] Allen, ep. 303.

[5] *Udalrici Zasii Epistolæ*, ed. J. A. Riegger, 1774, i, 251.

[6] *Ibid.*, 209. Zasius died on November 24, 1535.

[7] To Eramus, July 13, 1520, *ibid.*, 297. "Proceed, great hero, as you have begun; I care not for that ridiculous, senseless man."

[8] *Ibid.* ii, 45. "Super Erasmo quomodo non gestiam, qui mihi est instar magni non dico Apollinis, sed Numinis." A classical phrase almost proverbial, though not in the *Adagia*.

Not long after the humanist's return from the Netherlands to Basle he paid a visit to Freiburg,[1] of which he gives the following account in the *Colloquies*, using for his own name the transparent disguise of Eros:

> You know Eros, an old man, now a sexagenarian, with health more fragile than glass, afflicted with daily maladies of the worst sort and burdened with heavy labors and study that might break down even Milo. In addition to this, by a certain natural tendency, even from boyhood he hated fish and was impatient of fasting. . . . Recently at the invitation of friends he visited Freiburg, a city not altogether worthy of its name. It was at the time of Lent.

And yet, continues the interlocutor, in order to offend no one Eros ate fish. He felt illness coming on when Glaucoplutus,[2] a learned man and one of authority there, invited him to breakfast. Eros accepted on condition that he should eat nothing but two eggs, but when he got there he found a whole chicken prepared. Indignant, he ate nothing but the eggs, and then got on his horse. The smell of that chicken, however, reached the sycophants, who made as much fuss about it as if ten men had died of poison.

Fuller information as to the sequel to this unecclesiastical repast reaches us through a letter of Erasmus to Zasius, which he thought prudent not to publish himself.[3] He heard that Zasius had been called into court for offering a chicken in Lent. Notwithstanding the disclaimer in the just quoted *Colloquy*, it is evident that Erasmus had partaken of it, for he excused himself for not having observed "the superstition of foods" by alleging that he was suffering terrible torture from the stone and might have endangered his life had he fasted. At Basle, he says, meat is sold on fast days, and it is better that six hundred men who did not need it should eat than that one who really needed it should perish for the lack of it.

[1] "Ichthyophagia," LB. i, 805. This colloquy appeared in 1526; on the other hand, Erasmus's epistle to Zasius about it is dated February 20, 1523, which should probably be altered to 1525.

[2] Ulrich Zasius. See *infra*, p. 294, n. 1.

[3] *Zasii epistolæ*, 300 ff. February 20, 1523 (1525?).

Erasmus added that he did not blame the emperor for laying stress on such things, for he was misled by Dominicans and Franciscans, and will learn better with age and experience. He will then learn that there are worse faults to punish, such as highway robbery, and worse evils to correct, such as the calamities of harmless peasants, spoliation of the people, tumults, wars, and massacres. But now the magistrates who punish men for not fasting let them go scot-free for adultery. He himself hastened to get a dispensation from fasting from the papal legate Campeggio.[1]

Erasmus naturally cared little for the outward ceremonies of the Church. "My mind is Christian," he is once reported to have said, "but my stomach is Lutheran."[2] Though he ate meat when he needed it, his habits were temperate. His ordinary breakfast was one egg and a cup of water boiled with sugar. For lunch he had milk of almonds and pressed grapes.[3] Though he liked wine, he was always temperate in its use.[4]

A certain abstemiousness was recommended for reasons of his health, which for years had been far from robust. Frequent colds, occasional attacks of worse diseases, like the plague, gout, rheumatism, and a malady of the pancreas,[5] are often spoken of in his letters. When he migrated from Basle to Freiburg in 1529 he had been unable to ride horseback for two years, and had to be carried in a litter.[6] Twenty years before, at Venice, he had first felt the symptoms of the disease of the bladder known as the stone, and as time went on he suffered from gout and rheumatism, other signs of a superfluity of uric

[1] Dated February 2, 1525, W. Vischer: *Erasmiana*, no. 5.

[2] *Melanchthoniana pædogogica*, ed. K. Hartfelder, 1892, p. 175.

[3] LB. i, 805. *Colloquies*, "Ichthyophagia."

[4] In one letter he speaks of having drunk two kegs (vasa) in ten months, Lond. xxvii, 40; LB. ep. 1260.

[5] The "pancreatica valitudo" is spoken of in a letter of his amanuensis Gilbert Cousin to Amerbach, September 11, 1534; manuscript in the Basle archives, kindly communicated to me in photograph by Prof. Edna Virginia Moffett, of Wellesley College.

[6] Lond. xxiii, 14; LB. ep. 1064.

acid in the system. This diathesis is fostered partly by a heavy meat diet, such as was then in vogue among the well-to-do, but chiefly by the use of alcohol. Strange to say, this was so far from being understood that wine was actually prescribed as a remedy,[1] the only effort being to get a vintage sufficiently good. Other medicines also frequently did more harm than good, though whether this was the case with turpentine, which our patient speaks of using, I cannot say. Baths were also prescribed, but being unused to them the sick man was afraid to follow his physicians' advice in this respect. Though more enlightened than many of his contemporaries, the old scholar did not disdain to use a charm, namely a cup marked with an "astrological lion" which was supposed to impart virtue to his drink.[2]

At one time he consulted a man who had a great reputation at that time, a strange mixture of scientist and charlatan, of empiricist and empiric, and whose megalomaniac character is well indicated by his pretentious name: Philippus Theophrastus Aureolus Bombastes Paracelsus. While he actually did something to free medicine from the bondage of Galen and Hippocrates, and while he made a few contributions to science, philosophy, and theology, he mixed the whole in such a mass of cloudy incomprehensibility that it is difficult to assign him a high place among the discoverers. In 1526 he came to Basle, was appointed city physician and professor of medicine at the university, and made a few notable cures, among them that of Erasmus's friend Froben. But his insolence and self-conceit soon won the dislike of the local apothecaries and physicians and he was obliged to leave the town. Erasmus, impressed by the cure of his friend, consulted Paracelsus by letter, and received a reply that the sufferer was taking the wrong treatment, but that if he would follow the advice of his new doctor he would have a long, quiet, and healthy

[1] Lond. xxiii, 14; LB. ep. 1064.
[2] *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, Allen, i, 46.

life.[1] Erasmus marveled that so accurate a diagnosis could have been made by a man who had seen him but once. "I have time," he added, "neither to be cured, nor to be ill, nor to die, so borne down am I by labor and study." How far the treatment was continued we do not know, nor with what results, but the lack of evidence makes us suspect either that the humanist discontinued employing a physician who undoubtedly had a good deal of the quack in his make-up, or that Paracelsus was not sufficiently encouraged by his patient's frank statement that he could pay better in gratitude than in money.

The academic seclusion of the scholar did not wholly shut out the noise of stirring events. The year 1525 saw the most terrible rising of the lower classes that Germany ever witnessed. The revolt of the peasants, starting in the autumn of 1524 in the highlands between the upper Rhine and the sources of the Danube, swept in all directions until nearly the whole Empire was involved. The first serious check to it was given at Leipheim, on April 4, 1525, and after that it was suppressed with great severity and enormous slaughter. The old scholar at Basle was not called upon to take an active part in the movement on either side. His letters betray some nervousness as the fighting came near home. To Lupset he wrote that the revolt was like a hydra, of which, when one head was cut off, nine sprang up in its place.[2] To Polydore Vergil, he wrote September 5, 1525:[3]

> Here we have a cruel and bloody story; the peasants rush to their destruction. Daily there are fierce conflicts between nobles and rustics, so near that we can almost hear the noise of the artillery and the groans of the dying. You may guess how safe we are.

On September 24, 1525, he wrote to Everard, president of the Supreme Court of Holland, that much more than

[1] Anna Stoddart: *Paracelsus*, 1911, p. 297; Erasmus's reply, p. 298. *Cf.* also p. 83. Miss Stoddart does not say where she got the letters she reprints but the source is given by Enthoven, no. 163. On "Paracelsus in Basel" see F. Fischer in *Beiträge zur Vaterlandischen Geschichte*, v, 1854.

[2] Lond. xviii, 11. LB. ep. 790.

[3] Lond. xx, 59, LB. ep. 760.

one hundred thousand peasants had been slain in Germany,[1] that daily, priests, the inciters to the rebellion, were captured, tortured, hung, beheaded, and burned. The remedy, he added, though harsh, was necessary.

For the moment the whole of Europe seemed in turmoil. The apprehension and disgust with which Erasmus surveyed the situation is reflected in a colloquy that was first published in February, 1526. Among the evil signs of the times there enumerated are the following: the captivity of Francis I, the exile of Christian II of Denmark, the foreign wars of Charles, and the domestic troubles of Ferdinand; that all courts are in want of money; that the peasants revolt undeterred by their own slaughter; that the people meditate anarchy; that the Church is collapsing under the attacks of perilous sects; and that even the doctrine of the eucharist is called in question.[2]

Erasmus continued to have close relations with France, to which Francis I, eager to assemble all possible talent at Paris to ornament his reign, often invited him. "Alas, Budé," said the king one day, talking to that scholar, "we have no Lefèvre in our land." Budé replied that Lefèvre was not absent. "Ah! I meant to say Erasmus," answered the king.[3] Accordingly he dictated and in part wrote the following kind letter, dated Saint-Germain-en-Laye, July 7, (1523):[4]

[1] LB. Ep. 781. iii, 900. Erasmus's estimate is perhaps not far from the correct number.

[2] "Puerpera," LB. i, 766.

[3] To Marcus Laurinus, February 1, 1523; LB., ep. 650, iii, col. 757. On Erasmus's calls to France see Felibien: *Historie de la Ville de Paris*, 1725, iii 985; W. Heubi: *François I et le Mouvement Intellectuel en France*, 1913, p. 15. A. Lefranc: *Histoire du Collège de France*, 1893, pp. 45 ff.

[4] Vischer: *Erasmiana*, no. iv. Vischer places this letter, which is without year date, in 1522, on the ground that Robertet, who countersigned the letter, died in 1522, and by N. Weiss: "Guillaume Farel," *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme français*, 1920, p. 124, in 1524. The true date is found by consulting the *Actes de François I*, 1887, which shows that 1523 was the only year (1520-1525, inclusive), when Francis was at Saint-Germain-en-Laye on July 7th. There were many Robertets in Francis's service.

DEAR AND GOOD FRIEND: We have given commission to our dear and well-beloved Claude Cantiuncula, the bearer of this, to tell and declare unto you certain things on our part, in which we very affectionately beg you to believe and have entire faith, as you would if you heard them from us personally. Dear and good Friend, may the Lord keep you in his protection. [Follows in Francis's own hand] I assure you that if you wish to come you will be welcome.

FRANCIS.
ROBERTET.

When Claude Cantiuncula had delivered this to his friend, Erasmus hurried to complete the *Paraphrase to the Gospel of Mark*, which he sent to Francis by his servant, Hilaire Bertulph, with a letter dated December 17, 1523.[1] By the same messenger he sent a work called *Confession*, dedicated to Francis du Moulin, Sieur du Rochefort, together with a French translation of the same by Cantiuncula, dedicated to the king's sister, Margaret d'Angoulême.

The protection of the French king was the more necessary in view of the constant hostility of the Sorbonne. The theological professors, headed by Noel Beda,[2] in whom alone, as Erasmus once remarked, lived many monks, were on the point of taking action against the Dutch humanist, when the king intervened by asking, through his confessor, William Petit, for an account of their proposed censure. The faculty then decided to draw up no articles, but to depute Beda to satisfy his majesty in a personal audience, if he wished.[3]

Further complications arose from the zeal of Lewis de Berquin, a gallant and high-minded French Reformer who, though he did little but translate the works of

[1] Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, ii, no. 4 (*Sitzungsberichte*, Wien, 1879), with the wrong date, May 17th. On the true date see Weiss, *loc. cit.* On Hilaire Bertulph's trip to France see A. Roersch: *L'Humanisme Belge*, 1910, p. 75 ff.

[2] On Beda see Godet: *Le Collège de Montaigu*, pp. 66 ff, and A. Hyrvoix: "Noel Bedier," *Revue des Questions Historiques*, vol. 72, 1902, pp. 578–591. Beda was principal of Montaigu 1503–13; later attacked the "Mirror of a Sinful Soul" by Margaret of Angoulême, was exiled, and died on February 8, 1537.

[3] A. Clerval: *Régistres des Proces-Verbaux de la Faculté de Théologie de Paris*, 1917, p. 402.

others into his native tongue, did that with enough genius to make his name remembered in literature and in the history of Protestantism.[1] An admirer of Erasmus at least as early as 1519,[2] he put several of his works, and later several tracts of Luther, into French. For these, and for his *Apology against Luther's Calumniators*, he was summoned before the Sorbonne, on June 15, 1523, and reprimanded, while two days later his defense of Luther was publicly burnt.[3] In January, 1524, the Sorbonne subjected Erasmus's *Paraphrase to Luke* and the *Exposition of the Lord's Prayer* to a scrutiny. They let the matter lie dormant for more than a year, however. In May and June, 1525, they examined and condemned to be burnt French translations by Berquin, of the *Encomium of Marriage*, the short *Admonition to Prayer*, *The Apostles' Creed Explained*, and the *Complaint of Peace*. It was doubtless this act which excited the apprehension of the humanist and drew his attention to Berquin. He therefore wrote him on August 25, 1525[4] saying that he believed he had made the translations with good intentions, but requesting him to abstain in future, as he wished only for peace. On April 17, 1526,[5] Berquin replied, sending him a list of charges which he begged him to answer in full, and encouraging him by reporting a saying of the king to the effect that the Sorbonne is only brave against the weak, but fears to attack Erasmus. The Dutch scholar was impressed by the "impudence, sycophancy, and crass ignorance" of these articles[6] and wrote to Francis I, June 16, 1526,[7] partly to defend himself from the attacks of Beda and Sutor, partly to defend Berquin.

[1] On Berquin (1490–April 17, 1529,) see *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, ii, 643, and N. Weiss, in *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du Protestantisme français*, 1918, pp. 162 ff.

[2] N. Berault to Erasmus, March 16, 1519; Allen, ep. 925.

[3] *Notice des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, xxxvi, 326.

[4] *Postridie Bartholomei.* Lond. xix, 87. LB. ep. 753.

[5] LB. App. ep. 335.

[6] To Pirckheimer, June 6, 1526. Lond. xxx, 44. LB. ep. 823.

[7] Lond. xxi, 40. LB. ep. 826.

The opposing party had been suspected of using poison, he asserted, and had otherwise discredited themselves by their attacks on Lefèvre and himself. On June 14th he wrote a similar apology to the Parisian Parlement,[1] having previously defended himself by a letter to the Faculty of Paris.[2] His main line of defense is to show what a difference there is between Luther and himself, to prove which he sends the book directed by that "poisonous beast" against himself. Probably in consequence of Erasmus's letter Francis gave the order, July, 1526, to free Berquin from prison,[3] but the Parlement of Paris objected to this. In October Berquin was again arrested, and, after long proceedings, of which the humanist was kept informed,[4] he was sent to the stake on April 17, 1529.

Apprised of the death of his admirer, Erasmus wrote a detailed account of it in the form of a letter to a friend, and published it almost immediately in his *Opus Epistolarum* in August, 1529.[5] Berquin, he said, unmoved by the exhortations of Budé, who was one of the judges, and undaunted by the fear of death, had shown great bravery until the last, when his speech to the assembled crowd was drowned by the rattle of drums. The story told by the Franciscan appointed as his confessor, that he recanted at the last moment, Erasmus thought incredible, for he had heard similar fictions about the Lutheran martyrs at Brussels. Without venturing to say whether Berquin deserved death or not, he expressed frank admiration for the courage and sincerity of a man who was certainly not, in his opinion, a Lutheran, and who sinned chiefly through lack of prudence. Even had Berquin erred, he protested emphatically, it would be unprecedented to burn everyone for any degree of error,

[1] Lond. xx, 44. LB. ep. 824.
[2] Jortin: *Erasmus*, i, 492. June 23, 1526.
[3] M. Felibien: *Histoire de la Ville de Paris*, 1725, ii, 984.
[4] By a letter of Gervais Wain, dated Paris, August 16, 1528. Förstemann-Günther, no. 89.
[5] To C. Utenhoven, July 1, 1529. Lond. xxiv, 4; LB. ep. 1060.

no matter how slight. This would only result in condemning, hanging, quartering, burning, and beheading vast numbers of men, good and bad alike.

Though the Sorbonne could not burn Erasmus, they made things as hot for him as they were able. Together with their detestation of his tolerant spirit, they cherished a grudge against a man who frequently ridiculed them. Irritated by a slighting allusion in the *Colloquies*, first published in March, 1522,[1] Beda attacked the author and Lefèvre d'Étaples in a pamphlet in 1526,[2] and at the same time procured the condemnation of the *Colloquies*, taking pains to send their memorial on the subject to Louvain.[3] Among the thirty-two propositions selected for censure the most interesting is an expression in favor of tolerance.

Erasmus at once expostulated by letters to the king,[4] to Beda,[5] and to the University of Paris.[6] To the latter he wrote that he had hoped that if he were driven out by the Lutherans he might find refuge at the Sorbonne, but now it assailed him more fiercely than did the Reformers.

While the king again interfered to prevent further action by the Sorbonne,[7] Erasmus revenged himself on his three chief enemies, Beda, Quercus, and Sutor, by composing a biting satire in one of his *Colloquies*, called "The Synod of Grammarians," first published in 1528.[8] Some one asks the meaning of "Anticomarita" ("old wife"; *cf.* 1 Timothy, iv, 7), and is told that "It means

[1] LB. i, 631. Here it is stated as incredible news from Paris that Beda is wise and Quercus a preacher.

[2] *Bib. Eras.* 3d series, 6. Erasmus's letter to Beda, Lond. xix, 91, LB. ep.*ne* 746, is dated June 15, 1525, a mistake for 1526.

[3] *Notices des MSS. de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, xxxvi, 334; LB. ix, 904 ff.

[4] LB. vi, 943 f.

[5] LB. ep. 746, dated 1525 by mistake for 1526.

[6] *Corpus Reformatorum*, xcv, 1915, pp. 740 ff. This letter was sent by Caspar Mosager to Zwingli on October 16, 1526. LB. epp. 907, 908, 909. Enthoven, epp. 54, 67.

[7] *Catalogue des Actes de François I*, 1887 ff, i, no. 1702.

[8] LB. i, 824.

a kind of beet (Beta) which was formerly called 'swimming' (natatilis, a play on Beda's first name, Noel, or Natalis), because it dwells in damp, foul places, and flourishes especially in privies. It has a twisted, knotty stalk, and a nasty smell." Later, allusions are brought in to "the gall of the oak" (pun on galla, French, and Quercus, or Du Chêne), and to "the shoemaker's blacking" (sutorium atramentum, pun on Sutor).

Naturally this did not conciliate the Sorbonnists, who, in 1529, published another attack on Erasmus,[1] in the following year forbade the sale of his editions of Ambrose and Augustine, and in April, 1532, censured another work by his hand. When Erasmus heard of this he knew at last that the idea he had cherished of going to France under the king's protection[2] was vain. To his friend, John Choler,[3] he wrote of the new tumult at Paris, of the search made for his books under the seal of the absent monarch, and of the hostility of Beda, who did more through others than in his own person, and finally of the examination to which his works had been subjected by the Franciscans, who found a thousand errors in them. "I see," he concluded, "that it will simply come to pass that, if the Lutheran cause declines, such a tyranny of monks will arise as will make us wish for Luther again."

The aristocratic friendships formed by Erasmus broadened as time went on. Among his list of correspondents was Queen Margaret of Navarre[4] and King Sigismund of Poland.[5] His long letter to the latter, May 15, 1527, on

[1] *Determinatio Facultatis Theologiæ in Schola Parisiense super quam plurimis Assertionibus Erasmi*, 1529, *Bibliographie des impressions des œuvres de Josse Bade Ascensius*, par P. Renouard, 1908, ii, 403.

[2] He had toyed with the idea of going to France as late as March 30, 1527; see *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, p. 533; *Notices et Extraits des MSS. de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, xxxvi, 334 ff.

[3] Erasmus to Choler, September 9, 1533; *Pentas epistolarum* [ed. G. Veesenmeyer], Ulm, 1798, p. 3.

[4] September 28, 1525. Lond. xx, 2, LB. ep. 764. *Cf.* F. Genin: *Lettres inédites de la Reine de Navarre, Marguerite d'Angoulême*, 1841, p. 460.

[5] Lond. xxii, 16. LB. ep. 860.

the glories of peace, was quickly printed, to the regret of the writer,[1] who thought that it excited enmity against him in the court of Ferdinand, though not from the king himself. This monarch promised four hundred gulden a year if Erasmus would come to Vienna.[2] One of the most interesting letters written to the humanist is that from a famulus who went by the name of Felix Rex Polyphemus, telling how royally he was entertained at Spires, whither he went bearing letters from his master, as soon as it was known whom he served.[3] King Ferdinand himself gave him an audience, said that he would do anything for his master, and gave Polyphemus a good place, at one hundred and thirty gulden a year, in his guard of archers.

Erasmus's relations with the royal family of England were quite special. He had met the boy Henry in 1499,[4] had corresponded with him during the Italian years, and had hailed his accession to the throne (1509) as a triumph for humanism and progress. During the long sojourn in England (1509-14) Henry had received him graciously and Queen Catharine had asked him to become her tutor.[5] Nevertheless he instinctively felt the coming storm and that he would have more freedom on the Continent.

He almost became implicated in the quarrel between Luther and Henry VIII, each side suspecting him, as usual, of aiding and abetting the other. The English monarch, proud of his learning, had written, with the help of his ablest divines and scholars, a *Defense of the Seven Sacraments* against Luther's attack on them in the *Babylonian Captivity*. The work appeared in London in

[1] Erasmus to Christopher Scheidlowitz, August 27, 1528. Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, i, no. 12, and Miaskowski: *Erasmiana*, iii, no. 10. Sigismund wrote to Erasmus February 19, 1528, *ibid.*, and August 17, 1531, *ibid*, no. 12.

[2] John Faber forwarded this offer from Prague, June 17, 1528, Förstemann-Günther, no. 87.

[3] March 23, 1529. *Ibid*, no. 102.

[4] Allen, i, p. 6; Nichols i, p. 201.

[5] Allen, i, 569, ep. 296; Nichols, ep. 290.

July, 1521, and the king almost immediately sent a copy inscribed in his own hand, "Pro D. Erasmo." Another copy Erasmus saw while he was Wolsey's guest at Calais in August, 1521; Carracciolo handing it to him. He merely glanced at the title, and remarked: "I congratulate Luther on having such an adversary," but for some reason the book was not left in his possession.[1] He received one five months later, however,[2] and not long afterward an edition was published at Strassburg with two of his letters on the subject.[3] Some persons, indeed, suspected Erasmus of having a hand in the composition of the work, an ungrounded suspicion, but one which he took some pains to deny. His letter[4] on the authorship has been quoted from that day to our own as proof that Henry wrote his own book. It enumerates the king's accomplishments as musician, horseman, mathematician, and deep student of Aquinas, Biel, and Scotus. If the style resembles that of Erasmus, the latter explains it by saying that Henry was Mountjoy's pupil and Mountjoy Erasmus's pupil. As evidence of the king's ability to write Latin the humanist quotes a letter written to himself, of which he says he has seen the first draft. This assurance, which has so often been taken as conclusive, has recently been shown to be most suspicious.[5] He repeated his conviction that the king composed the book unaided, in a missive to Duke George of Saxony, saying again that if the style is like his it is because his pupil,

[1] Lond. xxiii, 6, p. 1229. LB. ep. 650. On the whole affair: Preserved Smith: "Luther and Henry VIII," *English Historical Review*, October, 1910.

[2] He says in February he received a copy sent in August, *ibid.* He is probably wrong about the date at which it was sent, which would allow too much time for the transmission. We know a copy was sent him by Dr. W. Tate (one of the collaborators), December 4, 1521. Allen, ep. 1246.

[3] Edition of 1522. The letters (which had just appeared in the *Epistolæ ad diversos*, November, 1521) are those to Warham and Pace, August 23, 1521. Allen, epp. 1227, 1228. Erasmus certainly had no hand in the edition of the *Assertio*. *Cf.* E. Voss, "Murner's translation of two letters of Erasmus," *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, v, 1904, 287 ff.

[4] To Cochlæus, April 1 (1522), wrongly dated 1529, Lond. xxiii, 15, and also LB. ep. 1038 and Nichols, i, 424. *Cf.* Allen, i, 433.

[5] Allen, *ibid.*

Mountjoy, was Henry's instructor.[1] At the same time he highly extolled the monarch, who relied more on the pen than on the sword.[2]

Luther answered the king in July, 1522, in as angry a tone as that of his royal opponent,[3] by his violence alienating still more the good opinion of the humanist.[4] Strange to say, Erasmus was suspected of writing this book, too, and was so much moved by the accusation that he sent his own servant to England to reassure Henry and Wolsey,[5] in which he was apparently successful. Though the king did not himself reply to Luther, he urged his ablest subjects, Fisher and More, to do so. They both complied, the latter under the pseudonym William Ross; Erasmus knew this work, but did not know that it was by his friend; in his opinion it outstripped even Luther's virulence.[6] Henry also urged Erasmus to take up the cudgels, and so vehemently that the humanist feared the king would take it ill did he not comply.[7] In fact, his final decision to write against the Wittenberg professor may have been due in large part to Britain's monarch.

A few years later Erasmus seemed likely to become involved in the great divorce on which all Europe took sides.[8] It is not necessary to enter into a full history of

[1] Basle, September 3, 1522; Gess: *Akten und Briefe zur Kirchenpolitik Herzogs Georg von Sachsen*, 1905, i, no. 371; LB. ep. 635. L. C. ep. 555.

[2] August 23, 1521. Allen, ep. 1228.

[3] *Contra Henricum Angliæ Regem, Luthers Werke*, (Weimar), x, part ii, pp. 175 ff.

[4] To Laurinus, February 1, 1523; Lond. xxiii, 6, LB. ep. 650. To Adrian VI (1523), Lond. xviii, 20; LB. ep. 649.

[5] To Pirckheimer, August 29 (1523), Lond. xxx., 33. Clava writes from Ghent, July 5, 1523, that Erasmus's servant, Levine, is just back from England (Enthoven, ep. 21). C. Tunstall, Bishop of London, wrote, July 7, 1523, that he was glad to hear that Erasmus had nothing to do with Luther's works. Lond. xxii, 22. LB. ep. 656.

[6] LB. x, 1652. *English Historical Review*, October, 1912, p. 673, note 23.

[7] To Pirckheimer, January 9, 1523; Lond. xxx. 30. LB. ep. 646.

[8] Preserved Smith: *The Age of the Reformation*, 1920, pp. 286 f, 290 f, 704, 708. On Erasmus's share in it, Preserved Smith: "German Opinion of the Divorce of Henry VIII," *English Historical Review*, October, 1912, pp. 671 ff.

the transaction, nor to probe Henry's strangely mingled motives of policy, conscience, and lust. The failure of Catharine of Aragon to have living issue, threatening a disputed succession, gave rise to rumors of divorce as early as 1514.[1] The birth of the Princess Mary in 1516, however, by giving the king hope of other children, postponed the execution of the plan for many years.

In view of later developments it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the queen's request to the humanist, made through her chamberlain, Lord Mountjoy, in 1524 or 1525, to write her a book on marriage, may have been in part due to her anxiety about her position.[2] When Erasmus complied, by publishing *The Institution of Christian Matrimony*[3] in 1526, he followed the previous work of his friend, Lewis Vives, on the same subject. The dedicatory letter, dated July 15th, extols the queen as the example of the most perfect wife of this generation, as her mother, Isabella of Castile, had been before her, and as her daughter Mary would doubtless be after her.

Marriage is defined as a perpetual and legitimate union of man and woman. The evils of divorce are so thoroughly canvassed that one is inclined to believe Erasmus must have known of the suspicions cast on Catharine's marriage. After remarking how inauspicious divorce has always been considered even by those nations which allow it, and how solemn and binding is wedlock in both law and religion, the writer begins to hedge by considering the impediments to marriage, some of which suffice to render any marriage null, some of which can break a marriage contract, but not consummated wedlock. Union with a brother's widow is expressly stated to be

[1] *Calendar of State Papers, Venetian*, 1509–19, p. 479.

[2] To Piso, September 9, 1526, Erasmus writes that the queen asked for the book a year ago. Lond. xxi, 65, LB. ep. 838. The dedicatory epistle to the queen, however, says that he had promised Mountjoy to write the book two years ago. Lond. xxix, 40. LB. v, col. 613 f. *Cf.* also to Beda, June 10, 1525, Lond. xix, 91, LB. ep. 746.

[3] *Matrimonii Christiani Institutio*, LB. v, 613 ff.

an insufficient cause for nullifying a marriage, the reason being that in some cases marriage with a brother's widow was expressly commanded in the Old Testament. The value of a papal dispensation is then considered; it is stated to be sufficient in some cases, but not in all. In general it may be said that the author takes a well-balanced view, inclining slightly to the side of the queen. The rest of the work considers the choosing of mates, which is best left to the parents, and the bringing up of girls, the main object being to keep them unspotted from the world, not letting them read romances nor hear loose talk nor see lascivious pictures, with which, Erasmus remarks, Bibles are often illustrated.

Catharine was apparently too busy to acknowledge the work at once, but after Erasmus had written on March 1, 1528,[1] gently reminding her of the dedication, praising her virtuous life, and exhorting her to patience in her present affliction, she directed Mountjoy to express her pleasure, and she sent a gift.[2] In the same letter Mountjoy voiced his hopes that Erasmus would come to England and referred to the invitation of the king. But the humanist declined,[3] for, as there was no definite offer of money, but only a general promise of freedom, the bid was not attractive. He felt too old, moreover, easily to take up a new abode, wishing only, as he wrote More, a convenient place in which to die.

By this time the plan for a divorce was well known. Erasmus received direct information of a rumored separation of "Jupiter and Juno" from John Crucius Berganus, who visited England in 1527, but did not think it safe to write until he had reached Louvain in

[1] Lond. xix, 69, LB. ep. 437.

[2] Förstemann-Günther, no. 66, dated 1527. On the true date *cf.* Vocht: "Erasmus's Correspondence," *Englische Studien*, 1909, p. 386. *Cf.* on the gift, Lond. xx, 87, LB. ep. 975. *Cf.* also to Christopher Mesias; March 30, 1530, Lond. xxv, 26; LB. ep. 1102.

[3] Henry to Erasmus, September 18 (1527?), Lond. xxvii, 31. Erasmus to Henry, June 1, 1528, Lond. xx, 73; LB. ep. 961.

[4] February 29, 1528, Lond. xix, 79; LB. ep. 936.

the following January.[1] On September 2d, Erasmus wrote his friend Vives,[2] who was deeply concerned in the matter, "Far be it from me to mix in the affair of Jupiter and Juno, especially as I know little about it. But I should prefer that he should take two Junos rather than put away one." "Would that Jupiter and Juno," replied Vives, "might devote themselves not to that ancient goddess Venus, but to Christ, the turner of hearts."[3]

In expressing a preference for bigamy to divorce, Erasmus but concurred in an opinion which, strange as it seems to us, was very commonly held at the time. Not only the Anabaptists, but many more sober reformers, and not a few Catholics and rationalists, held the view that polygamy, commonly practiced in the Old Testament and not clearly forbidden in the New, was a natural and in given circumstances a permissible state.[4] Whether Erasmus was solicited by Henry for an opinion, as were other learned doctors, is uncertain, but the subject continued to occupy his thoughts. Early in 1530 he wrote his intimate friend, Boniface Amerbach, that, as Henry had not married Catharine from love, his case is a hard one, but that, nevertheless, he advises him to marry his daughter to a noble and to make her son his heir. However, he asks whether, considering the bloodshed that would result from a disputed succession, a dispensation annulling the marriage might not be given, though it would be hard on the queen.[5] Amerbach

[1] Enthoven, no. 12, wrongly placed in 1522. On the true date January 28, 1528, Vocht, *loc. cit.*

[2] Lond. xx, 87, LB. ep. 975. On Vives' part in the divorce, *cf. Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.*, iv, part ii, no. 4990 (November, 1528), and Foster Watson: "A Friend of Sir T. More," *The Nineteenth Century and After*, March, 1918. *Opera*, vii, 134. Vives to Henry VIII, January 31, 1531.

[3] October 1, 1528. LB. ep. 990. *Vivis Opera*, 1798, vii, 192.

[4] Preserved Smith: *The Age of the Reformation*, 1920, pp. 507; "German Opinion of the Divorce of Henry VIII," *English Historical Review*, 1912, pp. 673 ff. W. W. Rockwell: *Die Doppelehe des Landgraf Philipp von Hessen*, 1904.

[5] *Erasmi epistolæ ad Bon. Amerbachium*, 1779, no. 11.

replied,[1] on February 28th, that the moot question was one for jurists, and that the pope had the power of granting divorce only in extreme cases. Though it is not certain that another marriage would produce a son, Amerbach added: "Were I a Lutheran I should say that a new wife might be taken without putting away the old, for polygamy was practiced by the patriarchs and Luther teaches that it is not forbidden by the New Testament."

That Erasmus did not embrace the queen's cause more warmly is perhaps due to his sense of injury because she did not take more notice of his compliments. In a work called *The Christian Widow*, dedicated to Queen Mary of Hungary, he referred to Catharine as "a woman of such learning, piety, prudence, and constancy, that there was nothing in her feminine, nothing not masculine, except her sex and beauty,"[2] and he took pains to call this passage to her attention. The small gift that he received very late did not satisfy him, especially when he contrasted her indifference with the autograph letter sent him by Queen Mary.[3] The poor woman had other things to think of than Latin adulators, no matter how exquisitely they burned their incense before her.

Just at this time the humanist was in close communication with Simon Grynæus, a learned Greek scholar who, having been professor at Heidelberg 1524-29, was called in the latter year by Œcolampadius to Basle to replace Erasmus.[4] A mission to England, in search of Greek manuscripts, led to his employment by Henry as one of the agents to collect the opinions of foreign universities and doctors on the divorce. Having already been in correspondence[5] with Erasmus on learned subjects, he

[1] Burckhardt-Biedemann: *Bon. Amerbach und die Reformation*, 1894, pp. 238 f.

[2] LB. v, col. 726. Other compliments in cols. 730, 766.

[3] To Mountjoy, September 8, 1529, Lond. xxvi, 20. LB. ep. 1077. To Mountjoy, March 18, 1531. Lond. xxvi, 39; LB. ep. 1174.

[4] *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, vii, 218.

[5] *Simonis Grynæi Epistolæ*, ed. W. T. Streuber, 1847, epp. 1–4, three from Erasmus to Grynæus and one reply, all without date.

now took letters of introduction from him to English friends, but while there won the ill will of More and of Tunstall and generally disgraced himself in their eyes by defending Zwingli.[1]

Whether he solicited Erasmus's opinion, as he did that of many other divines, is unknown, but that the old scholar was approached by the other side is expressly told, two nobles from the imperial court acting as intermediaries. Apparently he tried to avoid giving them a direct answer, telling them what he hoped would happen, not what divine and human law required. Protesting his loyalty to the emperor, he denied that the rumor that he approved of the divorce had any foundation. The matter he thought too hard for him to decide.[2] This was his reply to a letter from his Portuguese friend, Damian a Goes, who had written to express his surprise that Erasmus had favored the divorce, inasmuch as he has heard the direct opposite from his correspondent's own mouth.[3] A quite different impression, however, is given by a letter to another friend, then at Padua, in which the writer opined that the king was justified in getting a divorce at last, as his course had been approved by so many doctors and had been going on for eight years.[4] At the same time, when he heard the false rumor that Henry had taken back Catharine, though he regarded it as incredible, he hoped it was true,[5] and when Cochlæus, in 1534, wrote against the divorce, the humanist applauded him.[6]

Probably Burnet is wrong in saying that Erasmus secretly favored the divorce, but was afraid to appear in the matter lest he should offend the emperor.[7] About

[1] Erasmus to Viglius van Zuichem, November 8, 1533; LB. App. ep. 374.
[2] To Damian a Goes, July 25, 1533; Lond. xvii, 19; LB. ep. 1253.
[3] June 20, 1533, Förstemann-Günther, ep. 188.
[4] To Viglius Zuichem, May 14, 1533; LB. App. ep. 372.
[5] To Olaus, November 7, 1533; *Monumenta diplomataria Hungariæ*, xxv, 424.
[6] M. Spahn: *J. Cochlæus*, 1898, p. 250.
[7] Burnet: *History of the Reformation*, ed. Pocock, 1865, i, 160.

this time one of the humanist's numerous secretaries wrote a friend that Henry's divorce was indefensible because of the injury done to his daughter and because an heir might have been adopted with the consent of the people.[1] The fact is that Erasmus was pulled in two ways: he loved peace, and yet he was bound by ties to both the king and the queen of England. He could not help pitying the latter, while he saw with apprehension the possibilities of bloodshed latent in a disputed succession. He approached the matter as far as possible from the practical standpoint, hoping for the solution that would entail least hardship on all parties. He therefore remained non-committal, even when he wrote, in 1532, a special treatise on divorce,[2] intended as an answer to some enemy whom he designates as "Muzzle-mouth." There was an early English translation of this, though the exact date cannot be determined.[3]

However he may have felt toward Queen Catharine, Erasmus had no scruple in making friends with the Boleyns. Though it is hardly likely that he knew Anne's father, Thomas Boleyn, Viscount Rochford, personally, he received a letter from him dated November 4, 1529, in which the nobleman asked him to explain to him the Psalm, "The Lord is my Shepherd," and added to the Latin of his secretary in his own hand the English words: "I pray yow gyff credyt to thys and pardon me that I wryte not at thys tyme to yow myself. Your own asseurydly, T. Rochford."[4] Erasmus complied, dedicat-

[1] Gilbert Cousin to Ulrich Zasius, son of the Freiburg professor of that name. The letter is dated only "ex ædibus Erasmicis," and was presumably penned, therefore, in the years 1530–35. It was first published in Cousin's (Cognatus) *De iis qui Romæ jus dicebant olim*, Lyons, 1559. I owe this reference to Prof. Edna Virginia Moffett of Wellesley College.

[2] *Responsio ad disputationem cujusdam Phimostomi de divortio*, Freiburg, August 19, 1532. LB. ix, 955 ff.

[3] *The censure and judgment of . . . Erasmus: Whyther dyvorsemente betwene man and wyfe stondeth with the lawe of God. . . .* transl. by N. Lesse, London, wyd. Jhon Herforde for R. Stoughton.

Bibliotheca Erasmiana, i, 174. The *Dictionary of National Biography*, *s. v.* Nicholas Lesse, puts this dialogue in 1550.

[4] Förstemann-Günther, no. 114.

ing his *Ennaratio triplex in Psalmum XXII*[1] to Rochford, and later also his *Symboli explanatio sive Catechismus*.[2] For these he got a warm note of thanks and a present of fifty crowns, accompanied by the further request for a work on *Preparation for Death*.[3] Erasmus complied in this case also.[4] Less than two years later he heard from Chapuis of the expected execution of Rochford, who therefore had a very practical use for the work he had asked for. In the same letter he recounts the pitiful tale of the demise of Queen Catharine, much comforted, if we may trust the writer, by the same book.[5]

[1] LB. v; the dedicatory epistle, Lond. xxix, 34, is wrongly dated 1527.

[2] LB. v, 1133 ff. English translation: *A playne and godly exposytion. . . . of the commune Crede. . . . put forth by Erasmus.* London, Redman, no date (1533?).

[3] Rochford to Erasmus, June 19, 1533. Enthoven, no. 109. *Cf.* letter of Rochford's secretary, Gerard Phrysius, June 8, 1533, Förstemann-Günther, no. 187.

[4] LB. v. 1294 ff.

[5] Chapuis to Erasmus, February 1, 1536. Enthoven, no. 145. Catharine died January 6, 1536.

CHAPTER XI

THE COLLOQUIES AND OTHER PEDAGOGICAL WORKS

OF all the works of Erasmus the one in which his own nature and style appeared to the best advantage, that which surpassed all others in originality, in wit, in gentle irony, in exquisitely tempered phrase, and in maturity of thought on religious and social problems, was written as a text-book of Latin style. The *Familiar Colloquies* were intended to make easy and pleasant the once thorny path of learning for aspiring youth. They are stories in the form of conversations, always conveying, along with the necessary exercise in Latin, enough instruction and reflection on all sorts of matters to make them profitable reading for thoughtful minds. The author's most important "sources" were, indeed, his own experiences. If he borrowed something from Lucian, a plot from Hroswitha and a tiny bit from Poggio, far more he wove in of his own ripe thought on events in which he had participated.[1]

Like so many of its author's productions, this was a work of many years, each issue being a revision and expansion of the previous one. The first *Colloquies* were written at Paris in 1497 for the use of some pupils, among them Augustine Vincent Caminade.[2] The author did not intend them for publication, but, as he wrote later,[3]

> I dictated some trifles or other if anyone wished to chat after dinner and, as Horace says,[4] to sport informally by the fireside.

[1] See A. Horawitz: "Ueber die Colloquia des Erasmus von Rotterdam," *Historisches Taschenbuch*, 6te Folge, 6tes Jahrgang, 1887, pp. 53-122.

[2] On whom see Appendix.

[3] To the Reader, Louvain, January 1, 1519. Preface to the revised edition of the *Familiarium Colloquiorum Formulæ*, 1519. Allen, ep. 909.

[4] *Satires*, ii, l. 73.

There were some formulas of everyday intercourse and again some convivial conversations. . . . These trifles Augustine Caminade sucked up like an insatiable Laverna, and from them all patched up a book like Æsop's crow; or rather he concocted them just as a cook mixes up many scraps to make a broth. He added titles and names of persons from his own invention, so that the ass in the lion's skin might sometimes betray himself. For it is not as easy to write Latin trifles as some think.

Twenty years later Beatus Rhenanus got hold of these exercises and published them, without the author's knowledge, at Basle in November, 1518.[1] The work had a rapid sale, and several new editions were called for. Erasmus, at first indignant that his rough notes should be printed in such poor form, found it better to revise and acknowledge the work than to disown it altogether. A new edition was published by Froben on January 1, 1519, now bearing the title, *Formulas of Familiar Conversations, by Erasmus of Rotterdam, useful not only for polishing a boy's Speech but for building his Character;* this was revised and much enlarged in an edition of 1522 dedicated to young Erasmius Froben. The title was changed to *Familiar Conversations* in 1524, and at this, and at many other times, until March, 1533, further additions were made.[2]

The earliest colloquies are the easiest and most formal, dealing with such subjects as eating and drinking, games of ball, and matters of everyday life. All manner of proper salutations are catalogued, from the most distant to such affectionate titles as "my life, my delight, my little heart." Such instructions in manners are given as that it is polite to salute people when they sneeze or cough, and to wish them good luck, but not when their bowels rumble or when they are engaged in discharging the duties of nature. The interlocutors are Caminade,

[1] Preface to N. and C. Stallberger, dated November 22, 1518, in *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, p. 122.

[2] *Bibliotheca Belgica, Erasmus: Colloquia*, 1903–07. Allen, i, p. 304. Dedications to Erasmius Froben, August 1, 1523, Lond. xxix, 18; August 1, 1524. LB. i, 627. The text of the *Colloquies*, *ibid*, 629 ff.

James Voecht, a school-teacher of Schlettstadt named Sapidus, Erasmus, Erasmius Froben, Gaspar, Bernard, and others. The first two names date back to the Paris days; the others were added later. The conversations show that Erasmus joined his pupils in games of tennis, conversed with them on serious topics, and joked them on everything; one pupil, for example, was good-naturedly ridiculed for having a nose big enough to be used as a bellows, a harpoon, or a candle extinguisher.

In the edition of March, 1522, Erasmus added much, mainly on religion. The tendency of it is all liberal, to emphasize the life of the spirit rather than dependence on ceremonies. In a long *Religious Symposium*, an interlocutor called Eusebius says: "I have put Jesus instead of the foul Priapus as protector of my garden."[1] This free manner of speaking, and the juxtaposition of the two names, shocked the conservative. In a later edition, also of 1522, Erasmus added *An Apotheosis of John Reuchlin*, who died on June 20, 1522. In this the good man is represented as taken to heaven, whereas an obscurantist, called "the Camel"—probably the Carmelite Egmond—is satirized.

In the next edition, of August, 1523, Erasmus added much, chiefly on love and marriage. One dialogue represents a girl rejecting an infatuated suitor; another shows the young man warning the girl of the dangers of the cloister; and a third exhibits her repentance at having taken the veil. A fourth dialogue sets forth the inconveniences of marriage. Various anecdotes of the writer's friends are inserted, including one of Thomas More's early married life.[2] One of the interlocutors, Xanthippe, perhaps stands for the shrewish second wife of the same man. Nor did Erasmus scruple to add, in this textbook for boys, a realistic dialogue between a youth and a harlot, in which the former tries to convert the girl to a better life, and tells her that he himself has

[1] LB. i, 673E.
[2] Quoted above, p. 83 ff.

kept pure, even at Rome, by reading the Greek Testament of Erasmus. The author probably took the plot for this story from the tenth-century dramatist and nun, Hroswitha.[1] At any rate it illustrates the freedom with which such matters were then spoken of. Virtue was then supposed to lie not in ignorance, but in knowledge.

Another conversation added at this time contrasts the French and German inns, very much in favor of the former. Still another dialogue, between Antony and Adolph, doubtless Dutch friends of the writer, describes a shipwreck in the following manner:[2]

ADOLPH: The night was dark and in the topmast stood a helmeted sailor as a lookout for land. To him a fiery sphere began to stick,[3] which, coming alone is considered an evil portent, though if two come together it is thought to be lucky. Antiquity believed them to be Castor and Pollux.

ANTONY: What have they to do with sailors when one was a horseman, the other a boxer?

ADOLPH: Thus it seemed good to the poets. The skipper, who sat at the rudder, said: "Comrade" (for thus sailors address one another), "do you see the fellow sticking to your side?" "I see," said he, "I pray that it may be lucky." Soon the fiery globe fell down through the ropes and rolled to the skipper.

ANTONY: Was he not paralyzed with fear?

ADOLPH: Sailors are accustomed to monsters. Then after a short pause the globe rolled around the edges of the boat and disappeared through the hatchways. At midday a tempest began to gather. Have you ever seen the Alps?

ANTONY: Yes.

ADOLPH: They are warts compared with these waves. When we were borne up we could touch the moon with our fingers; when down it seemed as if the earth yawned and we were going straight through to Tartarus.

ANTONY: Madmen to trust the sea!

[1] LB. i, 718 ff. *Hrotsvithæ Gandesheimensis Comœdias sex* ed. J. Bendixen 1862, no. 5, "Phaphnutius." That Hroswitha was really known and studied at this time is proved by a picture of Albrecht Dürer, dated 1501, showing the nun presenting her book to the Emperor Otto. The woodcut is reproduced in *Klassiker der Kunst*, Dürer, p. 190. Charles Reade has used the Erasmian colloquy very effectively in his novel, *The Cloister and the Hearth*.

[2] LB. i, 712 ff. See above, p. 32.

[3] Called "St. Elmo's fire," or "the fire of St. Erasmus." See *Encyclopædia Britannica*. But did the name not originate with this colloquy?

ADOLPH: As the sailors strove with the tempest in vain the skipper, all pallid, came up to us.

ANTONY: His pallor presages a great disaster.

ADOLPH: "Friends," said he, "I am no longer master of my ship; the winds have conquered; it remains to put our trust in God and prepare for the end."

ANTONY: A truly Scythian speech!

ADOLPH: "But first," said he, "the ship must be lightened. Necessity knows no law. We must save our lives at the expense of our goods rather than perish with them." The truth prevailed and some boxes of valuable goods were thrown into the sea.

ANTONY: This was indeed to hazard a throw!

ADOLPH: There was a certain Italian present who had been on an embassy to the king of Scotland; he had a box full of silver and gold, cloth and silk.

ANTONY: He would not settle with the sea?

ADOLPH: No. He wished either to perish with his goods or to be saved with them. So he disputed the order.

ANTONY: What did the skipper say?

ADOLPH: "We would allow you to perish alone with your goods," said he, "but it is not right that we should all be jeoparded for the sake of your box."

ANTONY: A nautical oration.

ADOLPH: So the Italian also threw over his things, cursing by heaven and hell because he had trusted so barbarous an element.

ADOLPH: Soon the winds, by no means appeased by our gifts, tore away the ropes and sails.

ANTONY: Oh, calamity!

ADOLPH: Then again the captain approached us.

ANTONY: To make a speech?

ADOLPH: He saluted us. "Friends," said he, "the time has come for each one to commend himself to God and to prepare for death." Asked by some who were not ignorant of navigation how long he thought he could save the ship, he said he could promise nothing, but not above three hours.

ANTONY: This speech was harder than the former.

ADOLPH: Then he commanded all the ropes and the mast, as far down as the base in which it was standing, to be cut away and thrown, spars and all, into the sea.

ANTONY: Why?

ADOLPH: Because the sail, being torn, was no use, but only a burden; the only hope was in the rudder.

ANTONY: What in the meantime did the passengers do?

ADOLPH: There you would have seen a wretched spectacle; the sailors singing *Salve Regina*, praying to the Virgin Mother, calling her the Star of the Sea, the Queen of Heaven, the Mistress of the

World, the Port of Safety, flattering her with titles of which the Bible knows nothing.

ANTONY: What had she to do with the sea on which I think she never sailed?

ADOLPH: Formerly Venus took care of sailors, for she was believed to have been born from the sea; when she ceased doing so the Virgin Mother succeeded the mother not a virgin.

ANTONY: You jest.

ADOLPH: Some, falling down on the deck, adored the sea, pouring oil upon the waves, flattering it not otherwise than we might an angry prince.

ANTONY: What did they say?

ADOLPH: "O most clement sea, O most generous sea, O most rich sea, O most beautiful sea, be gentle and save us!" Thus many sang to the deaf sea.

ANTONY: Ridiculous superstition. What then?

ADOLPH: Some only vomited; most made vows. There was an Englishman present who promised mountains of gold to the Virgin of Walsingham if he came alive to shore. Others promised much to the wood of the cross in a certain place; others to the same wood in another place. The same was done for the Virgin Mary who rules in many places; they think the vow void unless they mention the place.

ANTONY: Ridiculous! As though the saints did not inhabit heaven.

ADOLPH: Some promised to be Carthusians. One vowed to go to St. James of Compostella with bare feet and head and with his body covered with an iron corselet, begging his bread.

ANTONY: Did no one mention Christopher?

ADOLPH: One man did, whom I heard not without a laugh. With a loud voice, lest he be not heard, he vowed to St. Christopher in the high church at Paris, a wax statue, or rather mountain, as big as himself. While he was shouting this as loud as he could, over and over, a friend of his nudged him with his elbow and said: "Take care what you promise; even if you sell all that you have you could not pay that vow." Then he, in a low voice lest Christopher should hear: "Hold your tongue, you fool. Do you think I mean what I say? If ever I reach land I won't give him a tallow candle."

ANTONY: Stupid fellow! I suspect he was a Hollander.

ADOLPH: No, a Zeelander.

ANTONY: I am surprised that none thought of the Apostle Paul, who himself was once a sailor and shipwrecked. He, not ignorant of evil, would know how to succor the miserable.

ADOLPH: No one mentioned Paul.

ANTONY: Did the passengers pray meanwhile?

ADOLPH: Earnestly. One sang the *Salve Regina* and another the creed. Some had special prayers, like charms, against perils.

ANTONY: How religious affliction makes men! In prosperity neither God nor saint comes into our mind. What did *you* do? Did you make vows to anyone?

ADOLPH: No.

ANTONY: Why?

ADOLPH: Because I do not bargain with the saints. What else is it than a regular contract: I give if you give; I will give wax if I swim out, or I will go to Rome if you save me.

ANTONY: But did not you implore the protection of any saint?

ADOLPH: Not even that.

ANTONY: But why?

ADOLPH: Because the sky is spacious. If I commended my safety to some saint, say Peter who stands at the gate and would therefore hear it first, before he had obtained an audience with God and explained my cause I should have perished.

ANTONY: What, then, did you do?

ADOLPH: I went straight to the Father himself with the Lord's prayer. None of the saints would hear me quicker or more willingly give what I asked.

ANTONY: But did not your conscience prevent you? Did you dare to approach the Father whom you had offended with so many sins?

ADOLPH: Frankly, conscience did deter me somewhat. But I soon took courage thinking: No Father is so angry with his son that if he saw him in peril of drowning would not pull him out by his hair. Among all the passengers none was more tranquil than a woman nursing a baby in her lap.

ANTONY: What did she do?

ADOLPH: Alone she neither cried out nor wept nor vowed, but only embraced her son and silently prayed. Meantime the ship was suddenly smitten with a wave. The captain, fearing she would burst in pieces, bound her together with ropes from prow to poop.

ANTONY: Miserable defense!

ADOLPH: Then a certain old priest whose name was Adam threw away his clothes, even his hose and boots, all except his shirt, and commanded that everyone should prepare to swim. Standing in the midst of the ship he gave us an exhortation from Gerson; that homily on the use of confession, and he bade all to prepare for either life or death. A certain Dominican was also present to whom those who wished confessed.

ANTONY: What did you do?

ADOLPH: Seeing all the tumult, I confessed silently to God, condemning my own righteousness and imploring his mercy.

ANTONY: Where would you have gone had you perished?

ADOLPH: This I committed to God's judgment, for I would not be my own judge, but I had good hope. Meanwhile a weeping sailor came to us. Let each one, said he, prepare himself, for the ship will

not last a quarter of an hour; it is leaking fast. Shortly after that he announced to us that he saw the spire of a church, and bade us pray to the saint to whom it was dedicated. All fell down to adore the unknown saint.

ANTONY: Had you addressed him by name perhaps he would have heard you.

ADOLPH: His name was unknown. In the meantime the captain guided the ship, as best he could, to the shore. . . . and as we approached, the inhabitants saw us, rushed to the shore and, fastening shirts and hats to lances, waved them to us, inviting us to shore and signifying that they deplored our misfortune. . . . The sailors let down a skiff into the sea, into which all tried to throw themselves; but the sailors with great tumult shouted that it would not hold all, and that the passengers should get what they could to swim with. One seized an oar, another a pole, another a tub, another a bucket, another a plank, and thus committed themselves to the waves. . . . I almost perished, . . . but with the help of a companion pulled out the lower part of the mast and floated on it. . . . But only seven were saved of fifty-eight. . . . On land we experienced the incredible humanity of the people, who with great alacrity supplied us with lodging, fire, food, clothes, and means of transport.

ANTONY: What people was it?

ADOLPH: The Dutch.

ANTONY: No people are more humane, though they are surrounded with savage nations. I hope you will not tempt Neptune again.

ADOLPH: Not if God give me a sound mind.

ANTONY: I prefer to hear such tales rather than experience them.

This colloquy excellently illustrates the manner in which liberal ideas were instilled into the minds of the readers. One by one the author took up most of the popular abuses in order to hold them up to ridicule. The conversation entitled, "The Inquisition of Faith," minimizes the Church's power of excommunication, showing that only God's fulminations strike the soul and that nothing is necessary to salvation but the Apostles' Creed.[1] A very mild satire on the "poor rich men," *i.e.*, the begging friars, holds up the ideal of men rich only in spiritual gifts. The worship of the saints comes in for constant derision. One of the boldest passages is the following, purporting to be a letter from the

[1] LB. i, 728. March, 1524.

Virgin Mary to Glaucoplutus, a pseudonym for Ulrich Zwingli:[1]

Mary, the mother of Jesus, to Glaucoplutus, greeting. By following Luther in persuading men that it is unnecessary to invoke the saints, you have done me a great favor, for hitherto I have been almost killed by the evil petitions of mortals. All things were begged from me alone, as though my son were always an infant, because he is so painted in my bosom, as if he still waited on my nod and feared to deny me anything lest I should refuse him the breast. Sometimes my worshipers sought from the Virgin what no decent youth would ask from a bawd, things which I am ashamed to put in writing. One day a merchant about to sail to Spain committed to my care the chastity of his mistress. A nun, having cast aside the veil and prepared for flight, recommended to me the reputation she was about to prostitute. A wicked soldier going to slaughter cried out: Blessed Virgin, give me the *Spolia opima*; the spoils of war! A dicer cries: Help me, saint, and part of the gain shall be yours. If the dice fall badly he insults and curses me for not favoring his vice. She who lives on the wages of prostitution cries out: Give me a rich haul! If I deny anything, they say then I am not the mother of mercy. The prayers of some others are rather foolish than impious. The maiden prays, Mary, give me a rich and handsome husband; the matron, Give me pretty little cubs; the pregnant woman, Grant me an easy birth; the old woman, Let me live without coughing and dryness; the old man, Let me be young again; the philosopher, Help me solve the insoluble; the priest, Give me a rich benefice; the bishop, Save my church; the sailor, Give me a prosperous journey; the perfect cries: Show me our son before I die; the courtier, Give me a chance to confess on my deathbed. . . . And yet with all this enormous business to attend to I get no honor. Formerly I was hailed Queen of Heaven and Lady of the World, now I hear only a few Ave Marias! . . . I wanted you to know this so as to get your advice, for I have taken the matter much to heart. From my stone temple, Basle,[2] August 1, 1524. I the Virgin sign this with my stone hand.

Other dialogues ridicule the superstitions of spiritism,[3]

[1] Erasmus uses Glaucoplutus as the Greek equivalent of Ulrich both here and elsewhere of Ulrich Zasius, as if the name was derived from words meaning "owl" and "rich." Zwingli had recently published a sermon against Mariolatry, "Eine Predigt von der ewigen reinen Magd Maria," September 17, 1522. Z. W. i, 385 ff.

[2] Apud Rauracos, a Latin name for Basle.

[3] *Exorcismus sive spectrum*, LB. i, 749, *cf.* above p. 80 f.

or of alchemy,[1] of fasting,[2] or of pilgrimages.[3] It is not surprising that some of them should have given offense to old-fashioned piety. Luther, for instance, though quoted, sided with the conservatives, and, in one of his late, harsh judgments, selects the colloquy on Mariolatry as one that mocks all religion.[4] This censure is, of course, wrong. What Erasmus mocks is not religion, but the false application of it. In proof of this, one more selection must be given, which, with the lightest and most delicious wit, reveals a real grasp of the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. The speakers are Cannius and Polyphemus, the latter being the name given by Erasmus to a youth who served him partly as a domestic, partly as an amanuensis.

CANNIUS: What is Polyphemus hunting for here?

POLYPHEMUS: You ask me what I am hunting without dogs or gun?

CANNIUS: Perhaps some hamadryad?

POLYPHEMUS: You are a good guesser. See, here is my hunting net.

CANNIUS: What do I see? Bacchus masquerading in the spoils of a lion, Polyphemus with a book! To see the hinges, clasps and brass bands, one might call it a book of war.

POLYPHEMUS: Open it.

CANNIUS: It is pretty, but you haven't decorated it enough yet.

POLYPHEMUS: What is the matter with it.

CANNIUS: You ought to have put your coat of arms in it.

POLYPHEMUS: What do you mean.

CANNIUS: The head of Silenus looking out of a barrel. But what does the book treat of, the art of drinking?

POLYPHEMUS: Be careful not to blaspheme without knowing it.

CANNIUS: What then, is it something holy?

POLYPHEMUS: The holiest thing in the world, the Gospel.

CANNIUS: Great Hercules! What is there in common between Polyphemus and the Gospel.

POLYPHEMUS: What is there in common between a Christian and Christ?

CANNIUS: I can't answer. But it seems to me that a halbard would

[1] LB. i, 742.
[2] LB. i, 787, *cf.* above, p. 266.
[3] LB. i, 774, *cf. spura*, p. 70 ff.
[4] *Tischreden*, ed. Förstemann & Bindseil, iii, 410–412, 422.

suit you better than this book, for when I see a man like you I take him for a pirate, or, if he is in the woods, for an assassin.

POLYPHEMUS: But the Gospel recommends us not to judge by appearances. Sometimes a gray cowl hides an inhuman heart, and sometimes a cropped head, bristling mustaches, menacing eyebrows, ferocious eyes, and a military costume, hide an evangelic soul. . . .

CANNIUS: Don't play the sophist with me. A man doesn't carry the Gospel in his heart unless he loves it, and he can't love it deeply without showing it in his acts.

POLYPHEMUS: You are too subtle for me.

CANNIUS: I'll explain to you more simply. If you carried on your shoulder a bottle of French wine, would it be anything else than a weight?

POLYPHEMUS: Certainly not.

CANNIUS: Suppose you took some in your mouth and spit it out again?

POLYPHEMUS: That would do no good, but I assure you that is not my custom.

CANNIUS: But if, on the contrary, according to your custom, you drank some of it?

POLYPHEMUS: I should like nothing better.

CANNIUS: It would warm your body, flush your face, and give you a happy expression.

POLYPHEMUS: Yes, indeed.

CANNIUS: The same with the Gospel. If it circulates in the veins of the mind it changes the entire nature of a man.

POLYPHEMUS: Don't you think I live as the Gospel commands?

CANNIUS: No one can tell better than yourself.

POLYPHEMUS: If I could only obey the Gospel the way I want to —with a battle ax!

CANNIUS: If some one called you a liar and a good-for-nothing, what would you do?

POLYPHEMUS: What would I do? Hit him in the eye.

CANNIUS: And if somebody hit you?

POLYPHEMUS: I'd break his neck for him.

CANNIUS: And yet your book there bids you answer insults with blessings, and if one smite you on the right cheek to turn to him the left.

POLYPHEMUS: I did read that—but I forgot it. . . .

CANNIUS: Well then, how can you show me that you love the Gospel?

POLYPHEMUS: I'll tell you. A certain Franciscan keeps reviling the New Testament of Erasmus in his sermons. Well, one day I called on him in private, seized him by the hair with my left hand, and punished him with my right. I gave him so sound a drubbing that I reduced his whole face to a mere jelly. What do you say to

that? Isn't that supporting the Gospel? And then, by way of absolution for his sins, I took this book I have here and gave him three resounding whacks on the head in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

CANNIUS: That is certainly evangelic, defending the Gospel by the Gospel.

POLYPHEMUS: I can tell you something else. There was another man of the same order who broke loose against Erasmus without the least restraint. Well, inflamed with evangelic zeal, I forced the man to beg pardon on his knees, and to confess that all he had said was at the instigation of the devil. All the while I had my halbard brandished over my head. I must have looked like angry Mars. Several people can tell you that this is true.

CANNIUS: I am astonished that he survived. But really it is time you were turning from a brute beast into a man.

POLYPHEMUS: You are right, for all the prophets of this time say that the end of the world is at hand.

CANNIUS: Another reason for making haste. . . . But why do your prophets think that the end is coming?

POLYPHEMUS: Because they say men are living now as they did just before the deluge; they eat, drink, marry and are given in marriage, have mistresses, buy, sell, borrow and lend at interest, and build. Kings make wars, priests devote themselves to getting money, theologians invent syllogisms, monks gad about, the common people rebel, Erasmus writes colloquies—in short, all possible curses exist at once: hunger, thirst, brigandage, war, pestilence, sedition, lack of good. Doesn't that all portend the last judgment?

But superstition was not the only foible satirized. One colloquy denounced war; another hit off the absurdities of the grammarians; a third was a plea for eugenics, at least to the extent of forbidding the diseased to marry.[1] Others treated of feminism, of horse-cheats, of miserliness, of false nobility, of the love of glory. In fact, every human, or at least every humanistic interest, is taken up, exposed to the free play of mind, and moralized.

Naturally, the free tone of the *Colloquies*, and their anti-ecclesiastical tendency, aroused bitter criticism. In the first acknowledged edition, that of March, 1522, Nicholas of Egmond, the conservative of Louvain, detected four passages savoring of heresy, one on vows,

[1] *Ἀγαμος γάμος sive conjugium impar*, LB. i, 826.

one on indulgences, one of confession and pilgrimages, one on fasting. The author had described a man who confessed having made, while drunk, vows to go on pilgrimages to Rome and Compostella and who had carried them out, although he was persuaded that they were foolish and that his wife and children suffered by his absence. Another passage attacked was this: "I hate a snake less than a fish. And I have often wondered why, when the Gospel freed us from the Mosaic law, we believe that God has put this more than Jewish load [of fasting] upon Christian shoulders."[1] In the next edition, of the same year, Erasmus modified these censures, and also deprecated the action about to be taken against him by the university of Paris. This was long delayed, for, though the university drew up a *Determination on the Familiar Colloquies of Erasmus* in May, 1526, it was not published until 1531, the author answering in the following year.[2]

Meantime Erasmus was busy defending his work against other critics. In the edition of June, 1526, he added a *Letter to the Reader* "on the utility of the Colloquies,"[3] moved thereto by the slander that waxed hot against every man and every book. In his book, he protests, he has for the first time aimed to make the road to learning a pleasant one, for he is convinced that play is the best teacher. Throughout, however, he has pointed morals, for example he has called attention to the evils of pilgrimages, which no one familiar with the disastrous fate of relatives left at home can deny. He has condemned, not indulgences, but the abuse of them. It is nonsense to say that he has ridiculed religion. As for the charge of lasciviousness in the dialogue between the youth and the harlot, he answers that the critics who strain at his gnat swallow the camels of Plautus and

[1] On this *Bibliotheca Erasmiana, s. v. Colloquia*, ed. of March, 1522.

[2] D'Argentré: *Collectio judiciorum, II*, 53-74. P. Imbart de la Tour: *Les Origines de la Réforme*, iii, 1914, p. 268.

[3] Lond. xxix, 19, May 19, 1526.

Poggio. The obscene word put into the mouth of the shameless girl is said to have been a common one even in the speech of honest matrons.[1] If anyone prefers he may write another word.[2] But save for this the author claims that he has made even the stews chaste.[3]

In like tone Erasmus assured his private friends that his work had in it nothing indecent, impious, or seditious, but that it had, on the contrary, profited many.[4]

To the author the most trying ordeal came not from the camp of his enemies, numerous though these were, but from a probably well-meant attempt to expurgate the offensive matter, in an unauthorized edition by Lambert Campester, a Saxon theologian of Louvain. This gentleman, described as "of squinting eye, but of yet more squinting mind, . . . corrected, that is to say, depraved, some passages about monks, vows, pilgrimages, and indulgences," and changed the names Paris and France to London and England, regardless of the sense; and he also forged an introduction in barbarous Latin, purporting to come from the author. He then published the hateful work at Paris.[5]

But the narrowly religious men in both camps continued to protest against the *Colloquies*. Ambrosius Pelargus, a shining light of Freiburg, said that all the youth had been corrupted by that work.[6] Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, was offended by them.[7] In 1549 one J. Morisotus, did his best to have the *Colloquies*

[1] Those acquainted with the literature of the time will see that this is not much of an exaggeration. Erasmus tells in one place (LB. v. 717) of a matron who slipped on the steps of St. Gudule at Brussels and was pained into uttering the same word he has here put into the mouth of Lucretia.

[2] "Mea voluptas" instead of "mea mentula."

[3] I cannot wholly agree with this; there are a few passages in the *Colloquies*—*e.g.*, in the "Puerpera," unfit for boys' eyes.

[4] To Wolsey, April 25, 1526, Lond. xxi, 33, LB. ep. 810. To John the Bishop (Fisher), September 1, 1528, Lond. xxii, 30; LB. ep. 974.

[5] *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, Allen, i, p. 9 f. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana: Colloquia*, i, 364.

[6] N. Paulus: *Die Deutschen Dominikaner im Kampfe gegen Luther*, 1903, p. 206.

[7] Förstemann-Günther, ep. 108.

superseded by a new work of the same name, written by himself.[1] Dionysius de Zannettinis, Bishop of Milopotamos and delegate to the Council of Trent, described them as very dangerous and as likely to make boys mock all religion.[2] They were censured by a papal commision of cardinals in 1537 and finally put on the Index, with the rest of their writer's works.[3] They were forbidden by the inquisition in Franche-Comté in 1535.[4] The Reformers, too, though they sanctioned the use of the *Colloquies*—perhaps exscinding some of the freer passages—in their schools[5] in 1528, finally turned against them. "On my deathbed," said Luther, I shall forbid my sons to read Erasmus's *Colloquies*. . . . He is much worse than Lucian, mocking all things under the guise of holiness."[6] The great Protestant scholar, Joseph Scaliger, thought there were many faults in the Latin of the *Colloquies*.[7]

All these attacks, however, did not greatly injure the popularity of the work, but rather advertised it. When Vesuvius wrote from France, on February 8, 1527,[8] saying that the censure of the Sorbonne did not alienate the esteem of good men, his opinion was fully borne out by the fact that the mere rumor of the coming condemnation induced a Parisian bookseller to hurry through the press an edition of twenty-four thousand copies.[9] In fact, the sales were enormous, and would be considered so even in modern times.[10] During the eighteen years

[1] A. Böhmer: "Aus dem Kampfe gegen die Colloquia Familiaria des Erasmus," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, ix, 1911.

[2] G. Buschbell: *Reformation und Inquisition in Italien um die Mitte des XVI Jahrhunderts*, 1910, pp. 48 ff.

[3] Preserved Smith: *The Age of the Reformation*, 1920, p. 420 ff. Mansi: *Conciliorum & Decretorum Collectio Amplissima*, Supplement V, 545.

[4] L. Febvre: *Notes & Documents sur la Réforme et l'Inquisition en Franche-Comté*, 1912, p. 178.

[5] "Instruction to Visitors of Schools," *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, xxvi, 174 f.

[6] Preserved Smith: *Life and Letters of Luther*,[2] 1914, p. 212.

[7] *Scaligerana*, 1695, p. 140.

[8] Enthoven, no. 47.

[9] *Cambridge Modern History*, i, 571.

[10] *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, for list of editions and translations.

from their first publication to the author's death about a hundred impressions were called for, and the popularity of the work rather increased than diminished during the next two centuries. This astounding success, which easily broke all previous records and was only surpassed, among contemporary works, by the vernacular Bibles, may be partly accounted for by the international reputation of the author, all civilized countries contributing to swell the sales. Another consideration was that the *Colloquies* were used as a text-book, and a successful text-book has always been one of the most vendible forms of writing. There were also many translations, one of the earliest being into Spanish.[1] Separate dialogues were also put into the vernacular: Clement Marot, for example, translating into French verse the dialogues entitled "The Abbot and the Learned Lady" and "The Girl Who Did Not Want to Marry."[2]

The influence of the Erasmian *Colloquies* on the thought of the sixteenth century was proportional to their popularity. Other works, indeed, such as *The Utopia*, *The Prince*, *The Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, and *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, may have ultimately done more to revolutionize the world's thought, but none of them made such a wide and immediate impression upon the minds of youths at the most impressionable age. The spread of the Reformation in particular, and of ideas still more liberal for that day and generation, was due more to this text-book of style than to any other one volume. Among the Anabaptists and among the Arminians, in Franck and in Acontius, the Erasmian liberalism obtained a full evaluation; in Rabelais and Montaigne it reached a still higher plane of expression.

Among the many educational treatises of all sorts penned by the scholar of Rotterdam, two of the earliest

[1] Bonilla y San Martin, in *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, pp. 435 ff. *Origines de la Novela* por D. M. Menendez y Pelayo, Tomo iv, 1915.

[2] *Œuvres de Clément Marot*, ed. 1731, Tome iii, pp. 116 ff.

were the *Method of Study*[1] and *The Double Supply of Words and Matter*.[2] In them the author expressed his preference for the study of language to "that elusive maiden Dialectic," the love of the schoolmen, emphasized the importance of vocabulary, gave examples of how to say the same thing in different ways, and recommended the study of Latin and Greek together for their mutual help.

Other commentaries, text-books, and treatises on pedagogy poured from his pen. Such was his edition of *The Distichs of Cato*, some moral couplets which had a great vogue in the Middle Ages, when they were supposed to have been written by Cato the Censor, though believed now to have originated in the third or fourth century.[3] Such was the Greek grammar of Gaza translated by Erasmus in 1516.[4] Such was the Latin grammar, composed jointly by Lyly and Erasmus for Colet's school, which was for centuries the standard Latin grammar, being the one used by Shakespeare, recommended by Doctor Johnson,[5] and the basis of the Eton Latin grammar now in use.[6]

This book made an immediate success; Sapidus, a well-known German schoolmaster, wrote Erasmus how delighted the boys were with his text-book.[7] In his reply[8]

[1] Translated by Woodward: *Erasmus on the Aim and Method of Education*, 162–78. LB. i, 517. First edition, 1511.

[2] LB. i, 3 ff *Cf. Catalogue of Lucubrations*, Allen, i, p. 9. First edition, 1511; first authentic edition, 1512. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, i, p. 65. Dedication to Colet, April 29, 1512, Allen, ep. 260. Simon Sinapius lectured on the *De Copia* at Wittenberg in 1540. G. Buchwald: *Zur Wittenberger Stadt- und Universitätsgeschichte*, 1893, p. 150.

[3] Preface, to Neve, August 1, 1514. Allen, ep. 289. Luther often quoted from Cato.

[4] LB. i, 116 ff. Allen, ep. 428. To Cæsarius, 1516.

[5] Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, ed. B. Hill, i, 99.

[6] LB, i, 167 ff. Preface, Basle, July 30, 1515. Allen, ep. 341. Colet wrote an English preface to this, in which he says "Wherefore I pray you, al lytel babys, al lytel children, lerne gladly this lytel treatyse and commend it dylygently unto your memoryes. Trustynge of this begynnynge that ye shal procede and growe to parfyt lyterature and come at last to be gret clarkes." A Feuillerat: *John Lyly*, 1910, p. 6, note 4.

[7] Allen, ep. 353.

[8] Allen, ep. 364; Nichols, ep. 366.

Erasmus expressed a very high regard for the calling of schoolmaster:

I admit that your vocation is laborious, but I utterly deny that it is tragic or deplorable, as you call it. To be a schoolmaster is next to being a king. Do you count it a mean employment to imbue the minds of your fellow citizens in their earliest years with the best literature and with the love of Christ and to return them to their country honest and virtuous men? In the opinion of fools it is a humble task, but in fact it is the noblest of occupations. Even among the heathen it was always a noble thing to deserve well of the state, and no one serves it better than the moulder of raw boys.

Erasmus had a good deal of experience in teaching, though he never remained for long a regular professor. He gave lectures at Cambridge, and he had taken private pupils at Paris and elsewhere. In this line he was highly successful, not only making his pupils devoted to himself, but producing really cultured men. At Louvain he took a lively interest in the university, especially in the foundation, by means of a bequest from his friend Busleiden, of the Collegium Trilingue, to be devoted, as its name indicates, to the cultivation of the three ancient tongues.[1] Very likely the plan owed much to his advice, as its execution was due to his co-operation. As Hebrew professor he secured the baptized Jew, Matthew Adrian. The plan of the instruction was set forth in a letter to John Lascar, asking for a recommendation of a Greek teacher:[2]

In this college shall be taught publicly and gratis Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. A sufficiently splendid salary of seventy ducats,[3] which may be increased according to the value of the person, is assigned to each professor. The chairs of Latin and Hebrew are already provided for; many are competing for the chair of Greek. It has always seemed to me that a native Greek should be secured so that the pupils may get a correct pronunciation at once.

[1] Allen, i, p. 434.

[2] April 26, 1518. Allen, ep. 836.

[3] A ducat was worth $2.25, or nine shillings, intrinsically; the salary would therefore be $157.50, or £31-10-0, per annum, at a time when money had ten times the purchasing power that it has now. Salaries in German and English universities at this time averaged somewhat higher. See Preserved Smith: *The Age of the Reformation*, 1920, p. 471.

As Erasmus has spoken of getting a Greek to secure the proper pronunciation of the language, it is interesting to note that he wrote what was long regarded as the standard treatise on the right pronunciation of Latin and Greek. Incidentally, the work is interesting as showing the author's acquaintance with various vernaculars, for he continually quotes words in English, French, Dutch, and German. Erasmus was well aware that the Romans sounded their consonants differently, in some cases, from modern usage. For example, he shows that in Latin c should always be sounded k. It is probable that Erasmus did not follow his own precept in this regard. A parallel case is that of De Quincey, who remarks in one of his essays that c is sounded like k, but would certainly never have been guilty of saying Kikero. Milton also touches this subject in his *Tractate on Education*, but contents himself with observing that the vowels should be sounded as near the Italian as possible. The main purpose of Erasmus's work was to protest against the "iotacism" in Greek—that is, the pronunciation of several different vowels and diphthongs like the Italian i. This is now, and was in the sixteenth century, the pronunciation of the modern Greeks, but the Dutch scholar rightly maintained that the ancients must have differentiated. His method became known as the Erasmian, opposed to the Reuchlinian, which was followed by Melanchthon. The former finally prevailed,[1] for it was adopted on the Continent by H. Estienne, Beza, and Ramus, was introduced at Cambridge by Thomas Smith and John Cheke in 1536,

[1] R. C. Jebb, in *Cam. Mod. Hist.* i, 581. Ingram Bywater: *The Erasmian Pronunciation of Greek and Its Predecessors, L. Aleander, A. Manutius, Antonio of Lebrixa.* London, 1908. This little monograph shows that, though the story told by Rescius of Erasmus's writing the *Pronunciation* to get credit for himself which belonged to others, is false; yet he had predecessors, first Antonio of Lebrixa (1444-1522) who wrote the *Descriptiones Latinæ*, then Manutius, who wrote *De literis Græcis*, 1508, following Antonio, and Aleander, who wrote on *Pronunciation*, in 1512, following Manutius. *Cf.* also T. Papa-Demetrakopoulos: *La Tradition ancienne et les partisans d'Érasme* (1903) and other works cited in the *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, iii, p. 45. Sandys: *History of Classical Scholarship*, ii, 232.

and, after the Reuchlinian pronunciation had been brought back in 1542 by Gardiner, was permanently restored in 1558.

Not only to the practical work of writing text-books and grammars, but to the exposition of pedagogical theory, Erasmus contributed much.[1] It is true that he was not very original in method, borrowing largely from Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Quintilian, Mapheus Vegius, and the German humanists. With the classical enthusiasm of the age he was thoroughly in sympathy, as he was with the highly aristocratic tendency of the Renaissance.[2] The training of an *élite* was his constant preoccupation and he saw that there was no education like converse with men of character and cultivation. "Live with learned men," he advised, "hear them submissively and with honor, study them, and never think yourself learned."[3] Logically, therefore, the tutorial system was postulated, at least as the ideal. This system, of course, is only open to the wealthy, and it is of the education of these that Erasmus always seems to be thinking. He had no democratic instincts; the immense services rendered to the common-school education of the people by Luther would not have appealed to him. His thoughts were absorbed in excogitating the rational training for a leader, a prince, a prelate, or at least an aristocrat like More or Pirckheimer. The chief, indeed almost the only, subjects to be taught were the classics. This idea, which seems so inadequate to us, was in reality an advance over the mediæval curriculum; the only subjects then taught, except a little barbarous Latin, had been dialectic and Aristotelian philosophy. Compared to this dry

[1] J. M. Höfer: *Die Stellung des D. Erasmus und des J. L. Vives zur Pädagogik des Quintilian*, Erlangen Dissertation, 1910. D. Reichling: *Ausgewählte pedagogische Schriften des D. Erasmus. Uebersetzung und Erläuterungen*, 1896. W. H. Woodward: *Erasmus concerning the Aim and Method of Education*, 1094.

[2] Well brought out by Imbart de la Tour: *Origines de la Réforme*, i, 556.

[3] Letter to Vadian, September 27, 1520. *Vadianische Briefsammlung*, hg. von E. Arbenz und H. Wartmann, 1890 ff. Seven parts and seven supplements, ii, no. 219.

course the classics offered real wealth of material. Nevertheless, it is fortunate that Erasmus's plan did not obtain exclusive dominance.

Erasmus saw that the earliest education must come from the mother, and laid down the sound principle that care of the body is the foundation of all. Work should begin by way of play, a tutor (whose qualifications are set almost impossibly high) should be secured when the pupil is five or six. If the boys are sent to school—which, however, is deprecated—lay schools are to be given the preference to religious ones.

The text-books edited by Erasmus allow us to see exactly the method he preferred. A glance at his *De Constructione* (Lyly's grammar of 1515) shows a considerable lack of logical arrangement. This may be partly intended; at any rate, reading was more relied on than formal rules. The first books to be read should be the Proverbs and Gospels in Latin, after them a Latin version of Plutarch's *Apothegms* and *Moralia*. Æsop is to be the first author read in Greek. It is plain that the moral element is preponderant in this choice, the predilection for sententious precepts being especially marked. It is noticeable that Luther shared this taste to the full; Æsop and Dionysius Cato, both edited by Erasmus, being among his favorite books. Following Quintilian, Erasmus then picks out to be read among the Greeks Lucian, Demosthenes, Aristophanes, Homer, and Euripides; among the Latins, Terence, Plautus, Vergil, Horace, Cicero, Cæsar, and Sallust. He excludes mediæval Latin, especially the romances of Arthur and Launcelot.

The author is to be read first for the grammar, then for the style, and finally for the moral instruction. The method followed was that recommended by Milton a century later, the teacher to construe the text to the boys one day and have them repeat it to him on the morrow. Writing was, of course, studied, especially prose, first the oratorical style, then the epistolary, and

then the historical. Poetry and Greek composition were also recommended.

It is astonishing to us that so little time is given to anything but language. All other subjects were supposed to be taken in incidentally to philology. History was a by-product of Livy, for example, and natural science of Pliny. Indeed, it sometimes seems as if knowledge of any facts at all was mainly valued for the sake of literary allusion. Unlike Luther, Erasmus put a very slight value on music. He apparently had little taste for it, sometimes mentioning the congregational singing in the reformed churches as one of their repellent features. Some emphasis was laid on deportment; in 1526 Erasmus wrote a primer of *Civility for Boys*, telling them how to carry themselves, how to dress, how to behave at church, at table, in company, at play, and in the dormitory.[1]

In advocating the education of women Erasmus was ahead of most of his contemporaries. He labored to refute the common but erroneous opinion that literature is neither useful to women nor consistent with their reputation and innocence.[2] One of the *Colloquies*[3] on the subject shows an abbot, who at first maintained that books took from the weaker sex what little brains they had, finally convinced by a blue-stocking that the learned women of Italy, Spain, England, and Germany had profited mightily by their studies. Both here and elsewhere Erasmus alleged the examples of Sir Thomas More's daughters, and those of Pirckheimer and Blaurer. With More's eldest daughter, Margaret Roper, he was indeed in occasional epistolary correspondence. In her nineteenth year she translated into English one of his tracts under the title *A Devout Treatise upon the Pater Noster*,[4] and he repaid the compliment by dedicating

[1] LB. i, 1033.
[2] To Budé, Anderlecht, 1521. Allen, ep. 1233.
[3] *Abbatis et eruditae*, LB. i, 744.
[4] F. Wiener: *Naogeorgus in England*, 1913, p. 7. *The Devout Treatise on the Pater Noster* was published by W. de Worde in 1524.

to her his *Commentary on Prudentius' Hymn to the Nativity*.[1]

The influence of Erasmus was doubtless great, but it was not revolutionary, because of the perfect accord between him and the liberal wing of contemporary thought. To distil the lessons of the classics and of the early Christian writings, and then to instil them into the minds of youth, seemed to that and to many subsequent generations the highest wisdom. The principal pedagogical writers of the next generation followed the humanist's recommendations exactly. What do we read in Ascham, and in Ramus, and in Eliot, and in Melanchthon, and in Vives, and in Starkey,[2] but variations upon the tune composed by the scholar of Rotterdam? What new matter did Milton, in the next century, have to recommend? Indeed, the humanistic reform of the sixteenth century formed the basis of all education until the latter part of the nineteenth, when living languages and new sciences began to take the place of the classics. Nowadays the old authors so familiar to our fathers have become little more than ghosts of their former selves; and, like the shades seen by Odysseus in the underworld, they revive to life and warmth only when they drink blood—that of the unappreciative youths and maidens still sacrificed to them in our schools.

Venerate the classics though he did, there was a depth of servility in their adulation to which Erasmus would not descend. He never tired of ridiculing those pedants who would speak nothing but the purest Ciceronian style. In the *Folly* he told of a preacher whose art completely swamped his matter. Elsewhere[3] he satirized those who spoke of Christ the Redeemer of the world as

[1] LB. v, 1337; Lond. xxix, 65. December 25, 1524.

[2] T. Starkey: *A Dialogue between Cardinal Pole and Thomas Lupset*, ed. J. M. Couper, 1878, p. 210 ff. An imaginary dialogue written in the time of Henry VIII.

[3] Letter to Francis Vergera, professor of Greek at Alcalá, October 13, 1527; Lond. xx, 15; LB. ep. 899. Similar expressions in a letter to Maldonato, March 30, 1527. *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, p. 530.

"Jupiter optimus maximus," and of the Apostles as "conscript fathers," as well as those who preferred Pontanus to Augustine and Jerome, and who placed the eloquence of Cicero above that of Jesus. That Erasmus's satire did not overshoot the mark is proved by the letters written by the papal secretary Bembo, in which, in order to avoid neologisms, he refers to Christ as "Minerva sprung from the head of Jove," and to the Holy Ghost as "the breath of the celestial zephyr."[1]

Erasmus not only declared that he would prefer Christ to ten Ciceros, but he asserted that even were he able to attain Tully's style he should prefer one more solid, more concise, more nervous, less finished, and more masculine.[2] In thus deprecating the idolatry of the humanists' demigod, he had the example of Valla, who, with his usual independence, preferred Quintilian.[3] With the purpose of urging his ideas still further Erasmus published, in February, 1528, a dialogue called the *Ciceronianus*,[4] at first incorporated with the *Colloquies*, but later printed in separate form. This lively work, written, as Gibbon says, with the same humor as Pascal's *Lettres Provinciales*, satirizes the pedants who, "by a wave of the Ciceronian wand, call up a land of make-believe, full of senates and consuls, colonies and allies, Quirites and Cæsars," and defends, as the subtitle indicates, a better method of writing Latin. The interlocutors are Nosoponus the "Morbid Toiler" for style, Bulephorus the "Counsellor," and Hypologus the "Arbiter." Nosoponus is the perfect Ciceronian, who boasts that "for seven years he has touched nothing except Ciceronian books, refraining from others as religiously as the Carthusians refrain from

[1] Kurtz: *History of the Church*, English translation, i, 503.

[2] In the letter to Vergera, Lond. xx, 15; LB. ep. 899.

[3] On Petrarch's idolatry of Cicero see Robinson and Rolfe: *Petrarch*, 1914, *passim*.

[4] LB. i, 971. Dedicated to J. Vlatten, February 2, 1528. Translated by Izora Scott, with an introduction by Paul Monroe, 1908. A critical text has been edited by J. C. Schönberger, Augsburg, 1919; a commentary is expected from the same.

flesh, lest somewhere in his writings some foreign phrase should creep in and dull, as it were, the splendor of Ciceronian speech." Drawn out by the ironical sympathy of his companions, he then tells how, with enormous labor, he has compiled three lexicons, in one of which he has set down all the words used by Cicero, in another all his phrases, and in a third all the metrical feet used by him in beginning or ending a period. So rigorous is his standard that he will employ only those forms of inflection found in Tully; thus, if *amo* is used by him, but not *amamus*, the former is taken and the latter left.

Bulephorus, then abandoning his pretense of agreement, and adopting the Socratic method, forces from Nosoponus the admission that in particular points and manners other writers are superior to Cicero. His advice, therefore, for the cultivation of style, is to follow the example of the painter Zeuxis, who, when he made a picture of Helen, did not use as a model the most beautiful woman, but chose what was most comely from several women. Thus, if we imitate Cicero in part, we can also learn much from the other great writers of Latin prose. Furthermore, it is impossible for us to speak in Cicero's vocabulary of things of which he knew nothing, and the attempt to do so lands us in absurdity. Why should we call God "Jove," Christ "Apollo," the Virgin "Diana," the college of cardinals "conscript fathers," an œcumenical council "the Senate and People of the Christian Republic," and adopt other awkward circumlocutions for such words as baptism, eucharist, excommunication, and apostles? In fine, continues Bulephorus, as present conditions differ widely in religion, government, laws, customs, occupations, and in the habits of men's minds, it is absurd to try to compress them all into the compass of an outworn speech. Bulephorus then passes in review all the great humanists, from the time of Petrarch, to whom he credits the reflowering of eloquence, and shows that none of them are truly Ciceronian; not Biondo nor Boccaccio nor Filelfo nor Pico della Mirandola in Italy, not Budé

nor Lefèvre d'Étaples nor Jean de Pins in France, not Erasmus nor Melanchthon in Germany, nor any of the English scholars. There is, indeed, one, Christopher de Longueil, who might claim the title of Ciceronian, for even in writing against Luther he avoided the word "fides" in the sense of Christian faith, and used "persuasio" instead.

That the sensible advice on style tendered in this *Dialogue* was much needed is proved by the storm it raised. Men who had in sober earnest advised aspiring stylists to read nothing but Cicero for two years on end could not but wince;[1] and, though Erasmus had paid many compliments to his contemporaries while passing their writings in review, certain Frenchmen were deeply incensed by his ridicule of Longueil,[2] and by his mentioning, in the same breath and as if on the same level, the great scholar Budé and the printer Badius. Some Italians, too, who saw Bembo in Nosoponus, dubbed Erasmus "Porrophagus" on account of his frequent use of the word "porro," and otherwise ridiculed his style.[3]

The attack was formally opened by an Italian physician at Agen on the Garonne, known to letters as Julius Cæsar Scaliger. He had been born, in 1484, at Riva on the Lago di Garda, and was convinced that he sprang from the family of Della Scala, lords of Verona. "What is more ancient," he boasts, "more famous, greater, more glorious, than the race of Scaliger, which in antiquity surpasses all the Theban offspring of the dragon's teeth, all the Arcadians, though called 'older than the moon,' the Athenian autochthones, the Latin aborigines—in fact, all fable and all memory?"[4] He says he had been a

[1] Vives describes such persons to Erasmus, October 1, 1523; *Vivis Opera* 1792, vii, p. 110; LB. ep. 990.

[2] E. Rodocanachi: *Rome au Temps de Jules II et de Léon X*, 1912, p. 134, on Longueil, quoting his letters. Longueil had died in 1522.

[3] R. C. Christie: *Étienne Dolet*, 1899, p. 197.

[4] *J. C. Scaligeri Epistolæ*, Toulouse, 1620, ep. 13, to Ferron. On Scaliger further see J. E. Sandys: *History of Classical Scholarship*, ii, 1908, p. 177; Mark Pattison, *Essays*, i, 1889, pp. 132 ff.

soldier, present at five pitched battles, and distinguishing himself with a valor and generalship unsurpassed—though the details he gives of these battles are sometimes contradicted by authentic histories. When he came to Agen in 1526 he was still unaccountably obscure; but, burning to distinguish himself in letters, he saw the chance to do so when he read the *Dialogue* of Erasmus. Borrowing it from his friend, L. Claudius, in 1529,[1] he answered it in three days, and at once sent off several manuscript copies to the various colleges of the University of Paris. Though it was dedicated, in flattering terms, to those "Excellent Youths," as to the defenders of letters and of the Gallic name, both of which, the writer avers, had been trampled upon by Erasmus, it was not received by them with the least favor. Some of the students at the College of Navarre[2] stole the copies, and others, the author asserts, plotted to murder him. A copy, he says, was sent to Erasmus, who forthwith wrote to his friends at Paris begging them by all that was sacred not to let the work be published. In reality, Scaliger thinks, Erasmus should have been grateful to him for calling the old man back to reason.[3] After much delay, the work was published with the help of Beda,[4] and appeared with a preface dated March 15, 1531, falsely asserting, in order to excuse the lateness of the answer, that the author had received the *Ciceronian Dialogue* only six months previously.[5]

The orator takes the position that Erasmus had assailed not only Cicero's style, but his character and ability,[6] as well as the French and Italian nations. To the

[1] *Scaligeri epistolæ*, ep. 11, to Sevinus, December 13, 1529.

[2] *Scaligeri epistolæ*, no. 1 ff.

[3] *Scaligeri Epistolæ*, No. 12, to A. Ferron, February 5 (1532?).

[4] *Scaligeri Epistolæ*, No. 9, to Beda.

[5] *J. C. Scaligeri Pro M. Tullio Cicerone, contra Desid. Erasmum Roterodamum, Oratio I.* 1531. I use the edition of Toulouse, 1620.

[6] The same charge was brought by Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, on July 20, 1784, wrote of the *Ciceronianus:* "My affection and understanding went along with Erasmus, except that once or twice he somewhat unskilfully entangles Cicero's civil or moral, with his rhetorical character." *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, ed. G. B. Hill, 1887, iv, 353.

former attack he replies by a comprehensive vindication of the Roman statesman; to the latter, though he anticipates Burke in remarking that "one cannot draw an indictment against whole nations,"[1] by animadverting upon the drunkenness of the Germans. The bulk of the oration, however, consists in abuse of his opponent, whom he calls a parricide and a parasite, a drunkard and a literary hack. After having left the cloister because tired of the religious life, Erasmus is said to have wandered from town to town, getting his living by mean occupations and by begging, and to have settled at the Aldine Academy in Venice, whence he had issued that collection of *Adages* which had first given him a name, though it was stolen from the works of other men.

It was probably this innuendo about his life at Venice that convinced Erasmus that the name Scaliger was fictitious and that his assailant was really Aleander, whose style he thought he recognized, as well as he knew his face.[2] When he wrote to reproach him for the attack,[3] Aleander replied in no less than four letters, denying the charge, expressing the highest regard for his old friend, and begging for a reconciliation.[4] But Erasmus, who had previously smarted under the treachery of the Italian nuncio, refused to be convinced either by his protestations[5] or by the following letter from Francis Rabelais,[6] then an unknown proof-reader at Lyons:

I recently learned from Hilaire Bertulph, with whom I am here very intimate, that you are planning something or other against the

[1] "Nihil in nationes integras invehendum," p. 9.

[2] "Ego illic phrasim Aleandri non minus agnosco quam novi faciem," to Choler, Horawitz, *Erasmiana*, i, 18, November 1, 1531. *Cf.* also his letters to Tomicki, February 4, 1532, Miaskowski: *Erasmiana*, No. 22; to Amerbach, November 29, 1531, *Erasmi Epistolæ ad Bon. Amerbachium*, No. 70.

[3] Lämmer: *Monumenta Vaticana*, 1861, p. 99.

[4] Two of April 1, 1532, one of July 4th, and one of July 5th, all published by J. Paquier: "Érasme et Aléandre," *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'histoire publiés par l'école française à Rome*, 1895, pp. 351 ff. *Cf.* Aleander to Sanga. January 28, 1532, H. Lämmer: *Monumenta Vaticana*, 1861, p. 99.

[5] To Viglius van Zuichem, LB. App. ep. 370.

[6] Förstemann und Günther, ep. 182. November 30, 1532.

calumnies of Jerome Aleander, whom you suspect of having written against you under the fictitious name of Scaliger. I will not allow you to doubt longer and to be deceived by this suspicion. For Scaliger himself is an Italian exile from Verona, of the exiled family of Della Scala, and now he is a physician at Agen, and a man well known to me. *By Zeus, he has no good reputation. He is, therefore, that slanderer,*[1] *as shall appear shortly. He is not unskillful in the healing art, but for the rest he is altogether such an atheist as no one else ever was.* I have not yet happened to see his book, nor has any copy of it been brought hither for many months, so that I think it has been suppressed by your well-wishers at Paris.

Erasmus wisely decided to treat the attack with silent contempt, nor was he stirred to reply by the further book against the *Ciceronianus* written by Étienne Dolet, a gifted printer and humanist of Lyons, later put to death as an atheist. This *Dialogue concerning the Imitation of Cicero in defense of Christopher de Longueil against Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam* appeared early in 1535.[2] In form it is an imaginary conversation between Sir Thomas More and Simon de Villeneuve, and it contains a good deal of rancorous abuse of the "old buffoon and toothless drybones," Erasmus. The man attacked was inclined to suspect that this, too, was written either by Aleander or by some one whom he had suborned to do it.[3] However, as he wrote his friends, Merbelius and Laurentius:[4]

I think it best to ignore the absurdities of these youths, whose violence tends to destroy learning as that of the heretics subverts religion; for their praises make the humanities inhumanities, and the Muses Furies. The book which you sent me I received some years ago. In it I see nothing pertaining to me. If they make me the enemy of Cicero they err as widely as possible. Now they say that at Lyons Étienne Dolet has published a sour book against me. . . . Julius Cæsar Scaliger has published at Paris an oration against me stuffed with the most impudent lies and the most furious reviling, although I am sure from many certain arguments that he is not the author of it. . . . I have no desire to strive with such enemies, nor do I think it expedient, and I hope you will also not answer them. They seek antagonists.

[1] διάβολος The italicized passage in Greek.
[2] Christie, *op. cit.*, pp. 204 ff.
[3] LB. ep. 1299.
[4] LB. ep. 1278, March 18, 1535.

Scaliger, who had been trying to get a friend to reconcile him to Erasmus,[1] stung by this letter, which was sent him by its recipients, immediately composed a second oration, which appeared in the winter of 1536-37, after the death of his enemy.[2] His abuse and vainglorious boasting are more outrageous than ever. While he himself is "the flower of the Italian nobility," his antagonist is a drunkard, and was a pedagogue at the court of Philip of Burgundy, and one who had ransacked the Italian libraries, as a perfidious plagiarist, to steal their treasures for his own books. This Scaliger avers that he has learned on the authority of John Jucundus[3] and Jerome Dominius, who had been his tutors in youth.

The opinion of the learned world was alienated by these savage attacks on an old and distinguished man. Scaliger himself later confessed that some people, for their love of his enemy, would have none of his books in their libraries.[4] Far from making common cause with Dolet, he was furious at the man who had dared to write on the same subject that he had chosen for his own, and falsely accused Dolet of having stolen all his arguments from the oration. John Maurisotus, a physician of Dôle in Burgundy, wrote a belated *Defense of Cicero against His Calumniators*,[5] but German opinion was favorable to the great humanist. Melanchthon wrote to Camerarius:[6]

I have seen Dolet's book and am thinking of instructing some one to reply to it. Erasmus, indeed, is not altogether undeserving of this Nemesis which has come upon him, but the impudence of this young man displeases me.

[1] To James Omphalius, Agen, May 4, 1536, *Scaligeri epistolæ*, No. 17.

[2] *J. C. Scaligeri Oratio II*, 1536. I use the edition of Toulouse, 1620.

[3] On Giovanni Giocondo, see Sandys, ii, index.

[4] *Epistolæ Scaligeri*, p. 78. "Fragmenta Præfationis J. C. Scaligeri in Aristotelis Historiam de Animalibus." Joseph Scaliger, the scholar, son of Julius Cæsar, said that his father was later sorry for having written against Erasmus. He, Joseph, tried to suppress his father's letters against Erasmus. *Scaligerana*, 1695, p. 140.

[5] J. Maurisoti: *Libellus de Parechremate contra Ciceronis calumniatores*, 1550; on which *cf.* A. Bömer: "Aus dem Kampf gegen die Colloquia Familiaria des Erasmus," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, ix.

[6] Quoted by Christie, p. 211.

Camerarius had already expressed his own opinion in a letter to his friend, Sigismund Gelenius,[1] as follows:

I learn that Erasmus has returned to you. I wish him a quiet resting-place at last, as his age and laborious life deserve. They say he has been most unworthily attacked by some Frenchman, by whom all his writings are not only rejected, but trampled underfoot on account of his *Ciceronianus*. They say that the Frenchman exults in the ardor of youth, but our Erasmus is languid with age. Wherefore I often think of Homer's verse: 'Old man, how sorely do the young warriors harass you!'

The opinion of those who would see the good in both sides—like the *tertium quid* in Browning's *The Ring and the Book*—was expressed by Roger Ascham in these words:[2]

Erasmus, being occupied more in spying other men's faults than in declaring his own advice, is mistaken of many. . . . He and Longolius only differed in this, that the one seemed to give overmuch, the other overlittle to him [Cicero] whom they both loved best.

"Those who can, do," says Bernard Shaw, "those who can't, teach." This cutting epigram was not true of Erasmus. If he spent his life largely in teaching the art of writing, he was himself one of the greatest masters of that art. As he never sought, so he naturally never attained, the distinctive beauty of the classics: that perfect adaptation of language to thought, that supreme artistry which, sometimes by apparently simple means, sometimes by perceptible elaboration, unfailingly achieved the desired and definite effect. Those who attempted imitation and nothing more fell into an arid, stilted pedantry, alike fatal to all freshness of thought and to all true beauty of form.

But Erasmus, having imbibed, as had few others even in that age of idolatry of the classics, the spirit of the ancients, finally attained a mastery of style at once original and attractive. That Latin was hardly a dead

[1] *Joachimi Camerarii Epistolæ*, 1583, dated "1531."
[2] R. Ascham: *The Schoolmaster*, 1563, *Ascham's English Works*, 1761, p. 305.

language, but one very much alive both in the mouths and on the quills of scholars, is proved by the perfectly living treatment of the medium by this great master. The very fact that the tongue he wrote was not exactly that of ancient Rome, that it was enriched when necessary with new words, and that it did not even precisely follow the classical usage in the more intricate sequences of moods and tenses, proves not that the writer was careless or ignorant, but that he had a different feeling for the value of words, due to an evolution in human thought itself and, within the narrow limits set by his own taste, perfectly legitimate. Thomas More was occasionally slovenly and obscure, Colet now and then ungrammatical; Luther, a great wielder of his own tongue, was anything but Hellenic or Roman in his thought and manner. But Erasmus, mastering his medium and not mastered by it, fitted modern thoughts into an ancient speech with the ease of a born artist.

Great care, infinite pains, went to the final result. When Erasmus blames "the vice of his nature" for undue haste in precipitating his thoughts,[1] he does himself an injustice. If he wrote rapidly at last, it is because he had toiled painfully at first. His own text-books on composition show the infinite pains he took to acquire a style. Like other masters of language—Pater and Landor, for example—he emphasizes particularly the selection of vocabulary. The words chosen should be apt, elegant, idiomatic, and pure, and like dress should be appropriate to the subject adorned. An unfit style is as awkward as a woman's dress on a man. Mean, unusual, poetic, new, obsolete, foreign, and obscene words should be avoided.[2]

[1] "Omnia nostra fere præcipitamus; hoc est naturæ meæ vitium." To Maldonato, March 30, 1527. *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, p. 545. P. S. Allen notes the speed with which he wrote his letters, compared with the laborious composition evinced in the epistles of his correspondents. See Allen's lecture on Erasmus, delivered for the Genootschap Nederland-Engeland, 1922, p. 16.

[2] *De ratione studii*, LB., i, 517 ff.

But Erasmus inculcated and practised other excellencies than this. Variety of construction is emphasized and rules given for the proper uses of the copious, and of the concise, manner. But the secret of his own charm is something more elusive and personal than any style acquired by mere study and rote could be. Like all great masters of speech, he invested everything he said with a peculiar and appropriate pungency. By whetting his words to a keen edge, he attained delicate polish and glow of supple beauty. One of the more external and striking elements of his style was the habitual moderation of his statement; the careful guarding against all glares of affirmation or denial. Is a reading in the New Testament ambiguous? No; it is only "slightly ambiguous" (nonnihil ambigo). Does Erasmus reject an argument? Far be such brutal positiveness from him; he "begins to have a glimmering of doubt" (subdubitare coepi). Erasmus thought that Luther wrote excellently well, but all he chooses to assert is that the professor's books are "rather more like Latin than the average" (sermo paulo latinior). Double negatives tone down an otherwise too conspicuous assertion. Except when he is writing to patrons for expected gifts, Erasmus speaks of his friends as "persons not altogether unknown to me." Diminutives play their part is qualifying the brutal shock of things; the writer's person is usually his "poor little body" (corpusculum).

But even as we grasp and press the style, its secret eludes us; the beauty of Erasmus's writings is something more subtle, more difficult, than can be readily indicated by rough analysis. Now and then there is a rapier thrust of perfect epigram; a stab, planted like a wasp's sting, infallibly on the nerve ganglion of the chosen victim. Still more perfect in its way is the repressed irony of the author, never more effective than when most latent, the dry wit that held up to scorn or ridicule an institution or a person, apparently by a simple, matter-of-fact narrative without an abusive, or vulnerable, word in it. It

was this that made the persons attacked so furious; they felt that they were being stripped naked and pilloried, while they could not find any weapon of defense. A candid, almost naïve description of a pilgrimage or of an inquisitor makes the reader wonder how anything so silly or so malignant was ever allowed to exist, but what was there in it all tangible enough to strike? A critic, after reading Anatole France's *Île des Pengouins*, a satire much in the Erasmian manner, said that there was nothing left to do but to commit suicide. When the monks read the *Folly* and the *Colloquies* they felt there was no appropriate comment but to murder the author.

CHAPTER XII

THE CONTROVERSY WITH LUTHER

THE importance of Erasmus's biography lies not only in his contributions to the beauty and wisdom of the world, but also in his representative function. In his own person he went through exactly the same evolution as did the Renaissance in the whole of western Europe, that of being at first the preparer, then the moderate supporter, and finally the enemy, of the Reformation. What was the cause of this process? The problem is one of the deepest in history, one of the most studied, and one in which there is least agreement. The answer here proposed is as follows:

Hitherto undue emphasis has been placed upon the Renaissance and Reformation in the history of the period of transition from mediæval to modern times. These movements have, together with politics and exploration, occupied almost the whole field of the history of the time. But contemporary with them there was taking place an equally important economic revolution, the change from gild production to capitalism. And outside of both there was a change in life perhaps most important of all made by the new discoveries: printing, glass lenses, gunpowder, the compass, and in the field of pure knowledge the Copernican hypothesis, and the lesser, but still important, achievements in mathematics and in natural science of Leonardo, Cardan, Servetus, Stevins, and Gesner. These are sometimes included in the Renaissance, but it would conduce to clarity of thought could that name be restricted, as it often is, to the literary and artistic revival of the classic spirit.

So much must be said, in order to put the Renaissance

and Reformation in their proper perspective. When it is once grasped that they are, not absolutely but relatively, smaller than they commonly appear to be, it will be easier to see that they are fundamentally two different branches of the same movement. Many writers, especially since Nietzsche, have regarded the Reformation as totally different from the Renaissance, a reaction against it and not a development of it.[1] But, according to the view here presented, this is an error, and the older opinion, common in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, that the two movements were nearly allied, is more correct.

No one can deny the striking similarity between the two. Both were animated by a desire for a return to antiquity, a nostalgia for the golden age of both pagan Rome and of Christianity. Both were revolts against the mediæval scholasticism. Neither was primarily intellectual or rational; both were literary and emotional reactions against the pure but barren rationalism of Aquinas and Scotus. Both were children of a new individualism, whether expressed in the art of Titian or in the doctrine of justification by faith only. The contrast sometimes drawn between their attitudes toward the things of this world and of the next is really unwarranted; both were reactions against the asceticism and other-worldliness of the Middle Ages. The Renaissance saw the cultural, the Reformation the ethical, value of wealth, industry, prosperity, and of woman; and both, in comparison with Catholicism, stressed the claims of this world rather than those of the next. Finally, both were children of the newly grown cities and of the bourgeois class, first brought to power in the state by the capitalistic revolution.

Why then, being so closely akin, did the two movements finally come to so bitter an antagonism that both could hardly survive on the same soil? It may be pointed out that the struggle itself is a proof of propinquity; one

[1] See my *Age of the Reformation*, pp. 730 ff.

cannot have a battle between a whale and elephant, nor can a firm dealing in shoes compete closely with one producing automobiles. The two fought because they were so near together; because both cultivated and both sought to dominate one sphere of human interest, the spiritual-mental for which we have no single word, but which the Germans call *geistig*. But perhaps the compound English word just used has its advantages, for it points out the difference in the ideals of the two movements, the one appealed primarily to the mental life of art and thought, the other primarily to the spiritual life of religion and morals.

And this is the only difference, save one presently to be discussed, which can be pointed out. It is impossible to call one movement liberal and the other conservative. Luther's rejection of the sacramental system of the Church shocked Erasmus by its radicalism as much as the humanist's play of mind over dogma repelled the Reformer by its liberalism. If, in his general attitude, the Dutch scholar was more open-minded, in particular points the Saxon heresiarch was more advanced. Even those men of the Renaissance who rejected the Christian mysteries did so not primarily on rational grounds, but rather on the authority of the ancients. If Livy exalted the Roman religion because it was patriotic, Machiavelli drew the conclusion that it was preferable to Christianity; if Tacitus spoke of Christianity as a vile superstition, his editor, Poggio, implicitly followed his *ipse dixit*. Nor can we see a general rejection of superstition by the leaders of either Renaissance or Reformation. Sir Thomas More was convinced the miracles did happen at shrines and that devils existed, and Benvenuto Cellini saw devils, just as did Luther. Nor was Erasmus himself altogether free from these obsessions of his age. Like his contemporaries, he hung votive offerings in churches,[1] and like them occasionally consulted astrologers.[2] He re-

[1] LB. v., 1335.
[2] Allen, ep. 948.

peated, without any clear indication that he disbelieved them, stories of witchcraft and of the direct intervention of devils in human affairs. However, notwithstanding these signs that Erasmus was a man of his age, there is much to show that he was more skeptical and enlightened than most of his contemporaries. In the *Moria*, in his letters, frequently in his *Colloquies* and in the epistle defending them, he ridicules such superstitions as alchemy, demonology, witchcraft, and spiritism. In his colloquy, "The Alchemist," he exposes the fraudulent practices of the magicians and the gullibility of the public. In the colloquy called "Exorcism of the Specter," after describing several bogus apparitions, he adds: "Hitherto I have not given much credence to the current ghost-stories; hereafter I shall believe them still less." Even in the letter to Anthony of Bergen, describing the doings of a wizard, he calls attention to the fact that witchcraft is a new crime, unknown to the civil and canon laws.[1] In summing up his position one may say that it is probable that Erasmus was skeptical of most current superstitions, without denying in principle the possibility of witchcraft or magic. It was much the position of Joseph Addison, who said: "I believe in general that there is and has been such a thing as witchcraft, but at the same time can give no credit to any particular instance of it."[2] Amiel and Froude go too far when they attribute to the humanist a complete and scoffing rationalism. Enough glory to him that in a superstitious age he effectively derided the cruel and the credulous.

Returning from this digression to a consideration of the relations of Renaissance and Reformation, we cannot maintain that the former was as tolerant, nor the latter as intolerant as they are sometimes represented. In the great and free fifteenth century, Jews

[1] Allen, ep. 143. But there are some allusions to witchcraft in both laws. One section of the *Decretum* (c. 6, X) is headed "De frigidis et maleficiatis."

[2] *Spectator*, no. 117, July 14, 1711.

and Moriscos, Hussites and Lollards, were sacrificed in holocausts; and there were some Reformers who stopped short of approving the execution of Servetus. Luther, in his first period, before he met with that hardest of all tests, complete success, was tolerant,[1] and the limits of Erasmus's endurance of false opinion are clearly marked. His very plea against some persecution—"Who ever heard orthodox bishops incite kings to slaughter heretics who were nothing but heretics?"[2]—indicates these limits, and still more clearly does a letter of uncertain, but late, date: "The Anabaptists are by no means to be tolerated. For the Apostles command us to obey the magistrates, and these men object to obeying Christian princes."[3]

In addition to this difference of emphasis on the things of the spirit and the things of the mind, the only important contrast between Renaissance and Reformation is that the first was an aristocratic, the second a popular, movement. The humanist sought to educate the classes; the Reformer to convert the masses. A corollary of this was that the former was international, the latter national. Erasmus's pacifism was based on a cosmopolitan culture that found any fatherland but the world too small; the intensification of nationalism following the Reformation was but the logical effect of the appeal to the patriotic peoples. The humanists spoke Latin, the Reformers the vernacular.

If there is any truth in what has just been said, the deeper reasons for Erasmus's changing attitude toward the Reformation become apparent. Sharing its interests, approving most of its program, he at first educated the Reformers and then did his best, for the four years following the promulgation of the *Theses*, to get them a fair hearing. But, after his return to Basle in November, 1521, he diverged more and more from them, and

[1] On Luther, *The Age of the Reformation*, pp. 643 ff.
[2] LB. ix, 904 ff. Propositio III.
[3] Lond. xxx, 77.

primarily for the two reasons just indicated; that his interests emphasized the cause of learning and theirs the cause of dogmatic religion, and because he both distrusted and feared a popular rebellion, evidently verging more and more toward violence. And once the breach was made and felt ever so slightly, it was widened by personal associations. Pulled by powerful friends toward Rome and pushed by the indiscreet and impertinent zeal of the innovators away from Wittenberg, it is almost surprising that for so long he tried to take, if not an openly approving, at least a neutral, position toward the Reformers.

The choice was hard for personal, as for public, considerations. Some of his best old friends—Hutten, Jonas, Pirckheimer at first, Capito, Œcolampadius, and others—hastened to enlist under the standard of the "gospel." Hatred, fear, and disgust at the actions of the "Pharisees" of Louvain and throughout the cloisters of Europe almost outweighed his dread of religious revolution. "Should Luther go under," he well knew, "neither God nor man could longer endure the monks; nor can Luther perish without jeopardizing a great part of the pure gospel truth."[1] The reports sent to Wittenberg, therefore, immediately after Erasmus's arrival in Basle, that he was working prudently to help the cause of truth, and that Luther and Melanchthon were much loved in that town, were not wholly without foundation.[2]

The enemies of the "Gospel" still regarded Erasmus as one of its chief supports. When he tried to get an imperial edict imposing silence on his detractors at Louvain, he was answered by one of the courtiers in a letter expressing doubts of the humanist's fidelity to the Church.[3] The emperor refused to do anything until he had some proof, such as a published work, showing that

[1] Erasmus to Spalatin, March 12, 1523; L. C. ep. 581.

[2] C. Pellican to Melanchthon, November 30, 1521. *Melanchthoniana Pædagogica*, ed. K. Hartfelder, 1892, p. 19.

[3] Guido Morillon to Erasmus (before March 20), 1522, Enthoven, ep. 15.

Erasmus was really hostile to Luther.[1] One of his friends attended a dinner given by King Louis of Hungary and his wife, the emperor's sister Mary, at which it was plainly said that the heretic had taken everything from the humanist.[2] In long letters to powerful friends[3] Erasmus did his best to clear himself of suspicion, protesting that rumors of his infidelity emanated from Aleander and the Dominicans of Louvain, that he had always said, even to Luther's patrons, the Elector Frederic, the King of Denmark, and the Captain of the Bohemians,[4] that the Wittenberger was wrong in many things. Moreover, he wrote, the Lutherans threatened him with spiteful pamphlets. He might have made a great deal had he taken sides for Luther, seeing that in Switzerland there were more than a hundred thousand men who hated the papacy and approved the rebel against it.[5] One bit of special evidence, indeed, tending to show that Erasmus was inwardly true to the Church at this time, is to be found in a thoroughly orthodox liturgy prepared for the press by him in 1523, though withheld from publication until two years later.[6]

When, in January, 1522, Erasmus's old friend Adrian of Utrecht was raised to the tiara to succeed the recently defunct Leo, the humanist regarded the event as by no means auspicious for the future peace of the Church. For, while Adrian was a sincere and moral man, eager to put down corruption at Rome, he had already taken sides with much energy against Luther, and he was known as a mere schoolman, untouched by polite learn-

[1] Haloin to Erasmus, March 31, 1522. Förstemann-Günther, ep. 6.

[2] Piso to Erasmus (after May 7, 1522), Förstemann-Günther, ep. 7.

[3] To Fisher, Jortin: *Life of Erasmus*, iii, 184. To Wolsey, March 7, 1522, partly published by A. Meyer: *Érasme et Luther*, p. 163 f. Abstract in *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, iii, no. 2090. L. C. no. 531.

[4] Artlebus von Boskowitz of Znaim, Supreme Captain of Moravia, who had urged Erasmus to join Luther.

[5] Erasmus to Jodocus, president of the Town Council of Malines, July 14, 1522. LB. ep. 629.

[6] J. Zeller: "Die Laurentanische Liturgie," *Theologische Quartalschrift*, xc, 280-284.

ing.[1] The humanist, however, judging it expedient to be on good terms with the powers, dedicated an edition of Arnobius to the new pontiff,[2] and wrote him a letter excusing his migration to Basle.[3] The pope replied, on December 1, 1522, and again on January 23, 1523,[4] requesting his correspondent to come to Rome and to write against Luther. The first of these breves was drafted by Aleander; the original concept is extant and is most interesting for the fact that in it there is more praise for Erasmus and more denunciation of the Lutherans than in the final form.[5] In his reply the scholar of Rotterdam promised to do what he could for the Church, but excused himself from going to Rome on account of his health. Together with complaints of the odium excited against himself by the Lutherans he inserted a plea for gentle means on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities, remarking that the Wyclifites in England were rather pressed gradually out of existence than driven by force and slaughter.[6] This advice the author himself felt would do little good against the opposite advice of Eck and the extremists.[7]

Adrian VI, however, did not give up hopes of employing so powerful a pen in the service of the Church. He deputed his nuncio in Switzerland, Ennio Filonardo, whom Erasmus had met at Constance in September, 1522, to ask the humanist to draw up a memorial on the quickest way to extirpate the new sect.[8] The request, however, called forth only an elaborate excuse for not

[1] So Erasmus wrote Fisher, 1522. Jortin, iii, 184. *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, iii, no. 2731.

[2] Lond. xxviii, 9; LB. ep. 633. August 1, 1522.

[3] December 22, 1522. LB. ep. 641.

[4] Lond. xxiii, 3, 4; LB. epp. 639, 648. On December 13th Hannibal wrote Wolsey: "His Holiness has sent for Erasmus under a fair color by his brief, and if he come not I think the pope will not be content." *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, iii, no. 2614.

[5] J. Paquier: *Jérôme Aléandre*, 1900, pp. 290 ff.

[6] Undated letter, Lond. xviii, 20; LB. ep. 649.

[7] So he wrote Pirckheimer, July 19, 1523 (not 1522), LB. ep. 631.

[8] Hartfelder, in *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte des Oberrheins*, N. F. viii, 1893, p. 27. *Zwinglii opera*, viii, 62, note 2.

complying with it.[1] The Lutherans, it is stated, already hated the poor scholar so fiercely that he would be compelled to leave Germany, though he knew not whither to flee, for in France there was war and England was disagreeable to him. To write against Luther would only excite new tumults; on the other hand, to write for him would be to make the heretics triumph and to exalt the author to a pinnacle as the god of Germany, for they regarded him as the only obstacle to victory. This letter Filonardo promised[2] to communicate to the pontiff, who, however, had died two days before it was written. On learning this Filonardo undertook to deliver the message to the next pope.[3] The same impression as that conveyed by the letter to Adrian was imparted by the writer to the Roman prelate Sylvester Prierias. To him the humanist declared that simply by doing nothing for the innovators he broke their strength more than did Aleander with all his frantic measures. "The Lutheran faction is not yet extinct," he added. "Would that it were, for it ruins all our studies."[4] At the same time he wrote to the powerful Cardinal Campeggio, protesting that he was not a Lutheran, even though, as he proved by inclosing an autograph letter from the Saxon heresiarch, the latter claimed him as a follower.[5]

But even while he declined to compromise himself by writing the memorial asked for by Adrian and issuing it under his own name, he probably had much to do with a tract called *Scrutinium divinæ scripturæ pro conciliatione dissentium dogmatum*, edited at just this time by Conrad Pellican. Not only has the introductory epistle, signed by Pellican, been attributed to Erasmus,

[1] Erasmus to a Roman Prelate, September 16, 1523. Nolhac: *Érasme en Italie*, 1888, no. 9, p. 112. The addressee is plainly Filonardo, who wrote the letters published in Förstemann-Günther, nos. 17, 18, 23, 24.

[2] September 23, 1523. Förstemann-Günther, ep. 17.

[3] October 22, 1523. *Ibid*, ep. 18.

[4] LB. ep. 664.

[5] P. Balan: *Monumenta Reformationis Lutheranæ*, 1884, p. 305. Either Luther's first letter, or one not now extant, must be meant.

but the main part of the work, published under the name of the Franciscan Satzger, shows strong traces of the humanist's collaboration. This irenic recommended moderation and conferences, and endeavored to show that all differences might be reduced to mere misunderstandings. The pamphlet did not have much success, for Luther judged it a foolish attempt to reconcile God and Belial, the Bible and the "sophists."[1]

From other quarters the humanist was constantly urged to take up arms in the cause of the Church. Duke George of Albertine Saxony, after hearing the Leipzig Debate, had turned his face decisively against the innovators of Wittenberg. The humanist had already been in communication with him through his dedication of Suetonius, and there had even been some talk of his taking a position at the University of Leipzig. Six months after his arrival at Basle Erasmus had written explaining the causes of his migration,[2] and bewailing his illnesses and the woes of the time. The duke's answer, accompanied by two books of Luther sent for the purpose of refutation, has been lost. Erasmus thanked him for the books, but remarked that he could not read anything in German.[3] He excused himself for not writing against a man who had begun to preach with the applause of all, and expressed fear that if he were crushed abuses might again become rife. He was of the opinion that silence was the best remedy and moreover that it was foolish to provoke those who could not be conquered. The duke received this response and other similar ones with great coolness.[4]

[1] K. Zickendraht: "Eine anonyme Kundgebung des Erasmus, 1522, im Lichte seiner Stellung zur Reformation," *Zeitsch. f. Kirchengeschichte*, xxix, 22 ff, 1908. Enders, no. 638.

[2] May 25, 1522. Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, i, no. 39.

[3] Gess: *Akten und Briefe zur Kirchenpolitik Herzog Georges von Sachsen*, i, 1904, ep. 371; LB. ep. 635. L. C. ep. 555.

[4] Erasmus wrote him again December 5th, fearing his letter of September 3d was lost (Horawitz, I, 40; Gess, 408); the duke replied it was not lost, but he

We do not know what were the books sent by George. Erasmus mentions reading with disapproval the Latin *De Abroganda Missa*, (published 1522) and of hearing of other works of a Hussite nature.[1] One work which he read and thoroughly liked was the *Tesseradecas*[2] (published 1520) a book of spiritual comfort. Indeed, even in 1523 he seems to have been not unfavorable to the Wittenberg reformer. To Peter Barbier, at that time chaplain of Adrian VI, he wrote on April 17, 1523:[3] would that Luther's charges against the tyranny, baseness, and avarice of the Curia were not true; and to Christopher, Bishop of Basle, he expressed the hope that the Reformer might yet be recalled to the ways of peace.[2]

Even while he was writing this Erasmus was much irritated by letters of Luther disparaging him.[4] Hoping still to restrain him he wrote Spalatin, on March 12, 1523:[5]

> I have never ventured to judge Luther's spirit, but I have often feared that the appearance of so much arrogance and vituperation would injure the cause of the Gospel, now happily reviving. . . . Would to God that he were gentler!

Erasmus could not fail to be influenced by the course events were taking. While Luther was absent at the Wartburg the reforms he had started were carried on at Wittenberg with increased rapidity by Zwilling, Carlstadt, and some men of Zwickau who called themselves the "Heavenly Prophets." Their innovations included

now thought it no longer of any use to write him (Horawitz, I, 41; Gess, No. 441, L. C. ep. 571). He wrote again, acknowledging the receipt of a lost letter, on May 21, 1524. (Gess, No. 662. L. C. ep. 626).

[1] To Laurinus, February 1, 1523. Lond. xxiii, 6. L. B. ep. 650.

[2] 1523. Lond. xxi, 8. LB. ep. 661.

[3] Lond. xxi, 1. LB. ep. 653.

[4] J. Fevynus to F. Cranveld, Bruges, March 17, 1523. Prinsen: *Geldenhauers Collectanea*, p. 74. Erasmus's "Dialogue" is here mentioned and also his resentment at a letter of Luther to a "canon of Erfurt." This is probably a mistake. One of the letters published under the title, "Judicium D. M. Lutheri de Erasmo," is meant. L. C. ep. 549.

[5] L. C. ep. 581.

not only religious reforms such as the breaking of images in churches, the abolition of fasting, the marriage of the clergy, but a number of socialistic measures as well, and their method of carrying them through, by mob violence, was more objectionable than the reforms themselves. The movement spread from Wittenberg to other parts of Germany, and of it Erasmus expressed his disapproval in a long letter to Christopher, Bishop of Basle, dated Easter Monday (April 21), 1522, and published in the following November.[1] It was to oppose these fanatics that Luther returned to Wittenberg early in March, 1522, and his success in restoring order won him a number of adherents throughout Germany and perhaps made Erasmus, too, think better of him.

The peaceful scholar must also have been affected by the acts of the inquisitors in the Netherlands. Hochstraten, the Dominican prosecutor of Cologne, condemned his books during the summer of 1522 and Erasmus was advised of the fact in a letter by Capito, of August 17th, in which his friend solemnly warned him of the danger of trying to keep the favor of both parties.[2] A sterner warning came in the arrest of two acquaintances, Probst and Grapheus, who redeemed their lives only by a solemn recantation.[3] But the inquisitors, soon finding men of less pliable stuff, burned two of them at Brussels on July 1, 1523. Erasmus read the published account of their fate, without being able to decide whether he ought to deplore it or not. Even if in substance they were right—such was his idea—they put themselves in the wrong by stirring up tumults. It is the manner that makes all the difference in the world. Indeed, he added confidentially, after comment on the *auto-da-fe*, "I

[1] Lond. xxxi, 43. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, i, p. 89.

[2] Förstemann and Günther, No. 9.

[3] They were arrested in December, 1521, and recanted on February 9, 1522. Köstlin-Kawerau, i, p. 604. P. Kalkoff: *Die Anfänge der Gegenreformation in den Niederlanden*, ii, 1903, pp. 61-69. The recantation of Grapheus was described to Erasmus in a letter by A. Brugnarius, November 4, 1522. Förstemann-Günther, ep. 10.

seem to myself to teach almost the same things as Luther, only without sedition and violence."[1]

More than to any other one person Erasmus's final decision to break with the Reformation was due to Ulrich von Hutten, the brilliant but unstable Alcibiades hitherto sitting at the feet of the Dutch Socrates[2] in an attitude of worshipful respect. The character and fate of this wandering knight might make the subject of a Shakespearean tragedy, for the hero, not without a genuine spark of nobility in his turbulent nature, precipitated himself through his own fault into an abyss of utter ruin. The ardor with which he apparently embraced Luther's cause spent itself in such futile ragings against the Romanists that they began to laugh at him as one whose bark was worse than his bite.[3] With savage fury he plotted with Sickingen to revenge himself by starting a holy war against priests and prelates throughout Germany.[4] The plan which, as Erasmus's friend Basil Amerbach remarked, was worthy of a Catiline,[5] matured early in 1522, when Sickingen attacked Trèves, only to be defeated and mortally wounded in battle on May 7th. When Hutten, with his friend Busch, wandered to Basle,[6] on the way committing some highway robberies to relieve his desperate need of money, Erasmus refused to see him on the pretext that Hutten's health did not permit

[1] The source Erasmus read was *Historia de duobus Augustiniensibus ob Evangelii doctrinam exustis*, published at Brussels on July 10, 1523. See O. Clemen: *Beiträge zur Reformationsgeschichte*, 1900, i, 42. Erasmus's letter on the subject to Charles Utenhoven, July 1, 1529, Lond. xxiv, 4, LB. ep. 1060. To Zwingli, August 31, 1523. *Zwinglii opera*, ed. Egli, Finsler, und Köhler, viii, 114.

[2] *Ante*, p. 130 ff.

[3] Busch to Hutten, May 5, 1521. *Hutteni Opera*, ed. Böcking, ii, 62; L. C. ep. 472.

[4] On all this P. Kalkoff: *Ulrich von Hutten und die Reformation*, 1920.

[5] C. Burckhardt-Biedermann: *Bonifacius Amerbach und die Reformation*, 1894, pp. 149, 158 ff.

[6] He was at Basle on November 28, 1522, *cf. Zwinglis Werke*, ed. Egli, Finsler und Köhler, vii, 622, and Burckhardt-Biedermann, *loc. cit.* Erasmus had allowed his praise of Hutten to stand in the edition of the New Testament of 1522, in a note to 1 Thes. i: 2, p. 516. *Cf.* "Catalogue of Lucubrations," Allen, i, p. 27.

him to go anywhere without a stove, whereas his own maladies would not suffer him to be in the same room with one.[1] Notwithstanding the polite form in which he couched his refusal, the insulted gentlemen resolved to revenge themselves. Busch announced his intention of writing against the humanist,[2] and Hutten actually did so, after trying to blackmail the man attacked into buying his manuscript.[3] Though his friends wished to do this, Erasmus refused and Hutten's pamphlet, under the title of *An Expostulation*, was accordingly sent to the press. In the meantime the aggrieved scholar had applied to the Town Council of Basle protesting against his enemy's continued presence in the town and the swashbuckler was accordingly expelled in the middle of January, 1523.[4] Fleeing first to Mülhausen and then to Zurich, he found an asylum with Zwingli. His rancor had found ample expression in his *Expostulation*,[5] which rates Erasmus for duplicity and cowardice, undertaking to show that while he secretly approved all the principles of the Reformation he was afraid to say so. Gradually, it was said, his attacks on Aleander, Hochstraten, and the rest had changed first into apology and then into flattery. Anything would be better than eternal vacillation; rather an open enemy than a false friend.

The savage attack cut Erasmus to the quick. Never, he wrote to a friend, would he have believed that there could be so much inhumanity, impudence, vanity, and virulence in one book as there was in the *Expostulation*, and that written by one whom he had so often praised![6] Just as peace seemed about to come, he elsewhere com-

[1] *Spongia*, LB. x, 1631 ff. Erasmus to Hutten, March 25, 1523 (not 1524) Lond. xxvii, 3; LB. ep. 672.

[2] Luther to Spalatin, March 1, 1523, Enders, iv. p. 91; Erasmus to Pirckheimer, August 29 (1523), Lond. xxx, 33.

[3] Böcking, ii, 179. Kalkoff, p. 506.

[4] Kalkoff, p. 591.

[5] Böcking, ii, 180 ff.

[6] To Pirckheimer, July 19, 1523 (not 1522), Lond. xxx, 29; LB. ep. 631.

plained, this awful storm of abuse burst and clouded the whole sky.[1] He replied with uncommon haste in a work entitled, *A Sponge to Wipe off Hutten's Aspersions*, dedicated to Zwingli because, as the author set forth, the antidote should go to the same quarter where the poison was brewed.[2] This suspicion that Zwingli was confederate with Hutten was not quite groundless, and was given color by the fact that the latter found a shelter near Zurich. To the Town Council of that city the humanist wrote a letter pointing out the harm done to the Gospel by the refugee, and the abusive lies he had uttered against many persons, not even sparing the pope and emperor, and he asked them not to shelter such a rascal.[3] The missive was at once shown to Hutten, who wrote a prompt answer to it.[4]

The Sponge,[5] distinctly a work of personal apology, takes up one by one the charges brought, and proves the writer's consistency. He has attacked only the vices of the Church, wishing, in a thoroughly loyal spirit, to mend, not to end her. It would be more honest of Hutten rather to help the pope to reform than to make his path harder. With some heat the author defends his cautious position by alleging examples in which Christ had apparently dissembled the truth or suppressed it as inconvenient to be spoken at all seasons. How different is the manner of the innovators! They, headed by the Wittenbergers, stop at no abusive language and at no scurrilous manners, though more could be accomplished by gentleness than in any other way. Defending his refusal to take sides, "I am a lover of liberty," he cries, "I cannot and will not serve a party."

[1] Allen, i, pp. 27 ff.

[2] To Zwingli, *Zwinglis Werke*, viii, 119, Lond. xxx, 52. *Cf. Zwinglis Werke*. viii, 93. Letter of Hutten to Zwingli.

[3] E. Egli: *Aktensammlung zur Zürcher Reformation*, 1879, no. 565 (wrongly put by Egli in 1524), August 10, 1523. The same in Böcking: *Hutteni Opera*, ii, 256 f; and Hess: *Erasmus*, ii, 572.

[4] Hess, ii, 574.

[5] *Spongia adversus Aspergines Hutteni*, LB., x, 1631 ff.

When the work came from Froben's press in the summer of 1523 Hutten was a broken man. Having abetted Sickengen's rash rebellion, the defeat and death of the captain left him alone and discredited. Seeking a place to die in, as his enemy recognized,[1] he had turned to Switzerland and, crushed by disappointment and disease, repenting having written and published the *Expostulation*, he breathed his last in an obscure corner of the world on August 29th.[2] This tragic event, though it did not prevent three thousand copies of the *Sponge* from being printed,[3] deprived that work, as its author regretfully admitted, of much of its welcome. He assured the public that he prayed for Hutten's soul, and offered an apology[4] for publishing his book at all, though one which perhaps did not much mend matters. He called attention to the fact that he had never reproached his enemy with "his military life, not to use a worse term," nor with his debts, nor with his vices, "which even his shameful disease could never make him stop." In the same tone of apology he wrote Melanchthon: "When that Thraso, pox and all, sought my house as a place in which to die, I refused, and then he begged the same from Zwingli, as the latter wrote me." Again, the man's perfidy in publishing letters unauthorized is alleged as a reason for having broken with him.[5] The battle was taken up by Otto Brunsfels, who wrote a reply to the *Sponge*.[6]

[1] Erasmus to Melanchthon, September 6, 1523 (not 1524), Lond. xix, 113; LB. ep. 703.

[2] To C. Goclen, September 25, 1523, Lond. xxx, 10. Beatus Rhenanus to a Friend, October 27, 1523. *Zeitsch. f. d. Geschichte des Oberrheins*, xxi, 1906, p. 48.

[3] To J. Faber, November 21, 1523; Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, ii, ep. 5; LB. ep. 658.

[4] *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, Allen, i, pp. 27 ff.

[5] September 6, 1524. Lond. xix, 113; LB. ep. 703. L. C. ep. 633.

[6] *Othonis Brunsfelsii pro U. Hutteno defuncto. . . .Responsio*, Böcking, ii, 325 ff. K. Hartfelder: "Otto Brunsfels als Verteidiger Huttens," *Zeitschrift f. d. Geschichte des Oberrheins*, viii, 1893, pp. 565 ff. There is at Cornell a copy of the first edition of the *Sponge* with the autograph, "Mathias Heros, philosophiæ professor, 1523." Matthew Held, late vice-chancellor under Charles V, is meant.

The skirmish with Hutten preluded a greater battle with Luther. Inevitably, as two great nations with interests in the same spheres drift into opposition and then into war, the two greatest religious leaders of the early sixteenth century felt more and more keenly their rivalry and the necessity of defining their differences in public argument. For, while Erasmus advocated, although without violence, many of the practical reforms pushed by Luther, his spirit was different. The Saxon was a friar and a schoolman; with all his denunciation of the "sophists" of scholasticism, he was their kinsman in that he asked the same questions as did they, even though he gave those questions new answers. But a man's interests reveal themselves more in the questions which he asks than in the answers he gives; as long as the dogmatic predilection was fundamental it mattered little that the Reformer strongly objected to some of the particular dogmas of his predecessors. Salvation, urgent and doubtful, depended, he thought, on knowing the absolute truth.

But to seek the absolute truth, and still more to find it, brands the seeker as a child or a dogmatist. It would never have occurred to Erasmus to put it in exactly that way, but he did see quite clearly the difficulties in arriving at the truth in any matter, most of all in the deepest problems of philosophy. To his temperament the all-important matter in religion was the life; beliefs were interesting, even rather important, but they were subordinate to the moral issue. It is really surprising how clearly the Reformers themselves saw this difference. In 1521 a student at Wittenberg wrote a friend that Erasmus was not much thought of there because his *Enchiridion* had made Plato rather than Christ his model, had mistranslated parts of Paul's epistles, and showed less courage than Luther.[1]

And yet the very fact that the two were able to join

[1] *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, hg. von Horawitz und Hartfelder, 1886, p. 281. Albert Burer to Beatus Rhenanus, Wittenberg, June 30, 1521.

issues proves that they were nearly allied in interest. Men with totally different spheres of action let one another alone. There was no battle between science and capitalism, between Copernicus and Fugger. As far as there was antagonism between art and religion it was silent, half-unconscious; only as an afterthought did Michelangelo come under the displeasure of the Church. Given, then, a community of interest and a divergence of type between humanist and Reformer, it was natural that the battle should be joined on precisely the issue taken, that of the free will, for both to the dogmatic and to the ethical mind this question is fundamental. To talk of morality without freedom of choice is absurd, said Erasmus; to speak of our own powers to attain grace and merit apart from God's eternal decree is impious, pontificated Luther. "All argument shows that our wills are bound," remarked Doctor Johnson, "but we know that we are free and that settles the matter." So it does for the man who accepts his own feelings as decisive; for the more deeply logical mind the arguments count.

The question had been a live one in the Church ever since the controversy of Augustine and Pelagius. The saint and philosopher of Hippo had for the time carried all before him, establishing as orthodox the position that God predestined everything and that, as far as merit went, the human will was absolutely impotent to do aught but sin. However, the common sense of mankind rebelled against the assertion of the bondage of the will, and throughout the Middle Ages the Church really held a semi-Pelagian position, by which it was hoped that God's foreknowledge and foreordination might be reconciled with man's freedom. Aquinas may be presumed to define adequately the orthodox view in the following words:[1]

> As predestination includes the will to confer grace and glory, so reprobation includes the will to permit some one to fall into sin and to bring the penalty of damnation for sin. . . . Reprobation is not the cause of the present fault, but it is the cause of abandonment by

[1] *Summa Theologiæ*, pars I, qu. 22, arts. 3-5.

God. Yet it is the cause of future eternal punishment. But the sin comes from the free will of him who is reprobated and abandoned by grace. . . .

The effect of divine foreknowledge is not only that a certain thing should happen in a particular way, but that it should happen either contingently or necessarily. That, therefore, happens infallibly and necessarily which divine foreknowledge disposes to happen infallibly and necessarily, and that happens contingently which the reason of divine foreknowledge so conceives that it should happen contingently. . . .

No one has been so insane as to say that merits were the cause of divine predestination viewed from the standpoint of God's predestinating act.

St. Thomas felt the need of exonerating God from the charge of punishing men for inevitable evils; he labored not a little to show that though God might be the cause of the evil arising from the corruption of things, he was not the cause of evil arising from defect of action.[1] Finally, after having asserted strongly God's power of predestination he came out plainly with the statement, so difficult to reconcile with this position: "Man has free will; otherwise counsel, exhortation, precept, prohibition, reward and punishment would all be in vain."[2] It was this last statement that was most emphasized for the common man.[3]

The question again attained prominence in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Lorenzo Valla, so much studied by the Dutch humanist, had written a work in favor of free will,[4] preferring to doubt God's omnipotence rather than his goodness. At the same time he tried to reconcile free will for men with a doctrine of predestination and foreknowledge of God. When published by the Reformer Vadian in 1518, this treatise came to the notice of the Wittenberg professors, and the author's "stoical opinion" was rejected by Melanchthon. Luther's

[1] Qu. 49, art. 2.

[2] Qu. 83, art. 1.

[3] Dante: *Purgatorio*, canto 16, *Paradiso*, 5. See also the fourteenth century poem, *The Pearl*, ed. by C. S. Osgood, p. xxxix, and C. F. Brown in *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, xix, 115 ff.

[4] E. Maier: *Die Willensfreiheit bei L. Valla.* Bonn Dissertation, 1911.

praise of a work taking the opposite side of the question must be understood as merely relative, an indirect way of scoring Erasmus.[1] The Italian skeptic, Pomponazzi, had also written on the subject in 1520, though his work was not published until 1557.[2]

When Erasmus took the offensive the choice of this subject was motived partly by his wish not to interfere with any of the practical reforms undertaken by Luther, with many of which he was in sympathy, and partly by the fact that this dogma lay at the very heart of the Protestant system, being, in fact, no more than the reverse side of the famous doctrine of justification by faith only. Where everything is performed by the grace of God there is nothing left for the human will. In fact, the Wittenberg professor was so far from strict determinism that he allowed man free choice in a lower sphere, so to speak, than that of religion. We can, he said, go in and out as we like, milk the cow or not do it; our wills can even, as the Augsburg Confession put it, "work a certain civil righteousness." The point was that this had not the slightest effect on salvation. It was on this issue that he had first detected heresy in the humanist; in previously cited epistles of 1516 and 1517 he had criticized the editor of the Greek Testament for misunderstanding the Pauline conception of the nature of sin and for undervaluing grace. His own opinion was early expressed in his lectures, in his *Resolutions*, and at the Heidelberg Debate in April, 1518. He had there maintained the thesis that "free will, after the fall, was only a name, and that when a man acted according to his own being he sinned mortally." This was reported by Martin Bucer, a hearer, to Beatus Rhenanus; the report was probably forwarded by the recipient to his great friend.[3]

[1] *Tischreden*, Weimar, i, no. 259.

[2] *De Fato, Libero Arbitrio, Predestinatione. Cf.* Christie: *Pomponatius*, p. 149.

[3] *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, ed. Horawitz und Hartfelder, 1886, p. 113.

When the bull *Exsurge Domine* (1520) condemned the opinion on free will quoted above, Luther defended it at length, citing Augustine and many biblical texts to prove his point.[1] This *Refutation of the Bull* was in turn refuted by Bishop Fisher of Rochester in a tract[2] from which the Dutchman borrowed a good deal. Denial of free will was mentioned by Aleander, in his speech before the Diet of Worms, as a cardinal heresy of the Saxon.[3] Melanchthon, however, adopted his friend's position and expressed it still more clearly, if possible, in his *Loci Communes*, a text-book of theology printed in 1521.[4] Carlstadt also adopted his friend's position and defended it at great length at the Leipzig Debate with Eck.[5] This also came to the notice of Erasmus.

His opinion, at an early date, is doubtless reflected in the words of Capito, in some sort his emissary, who on a visit to Wittenberg on September 30, 1521, told Melanchthon that Luther overemphasized grace and the bondage of the will.[6] "The Lutherans call me a Pelagian,"[7] Erasmus reported as early as 1522; but, on consulting theologians about his interpretation of Romans ix in his New Testament and in his *Paraphrase*, he learned that they approved his position except only that they thought he attributed rather too much to the freedom of the will.[8] In a letter to Zwingli he enumerated as Luther's three chief errors, (1) his designation of all good works as mortal sin, (2) his denial of free will, (3) justification by faith only; but he added that he had refused

[1] *Refutatio omnium articulorum*, December, 1520; *Luthers Werke*, Weimar vii, 94.

[2] *Assertionis Lutheri Confutatio*, analyzed by Zickendraht: *Der Streit zwischen Erasmus und Luther über die Willensfreiheit*, 1909, pp. 183 ff.

[3] J. Paquier: *Aléandre*, p. 200.

[4] *Corpus Reformatorum*, xxi, 86 ff.

[5] O. Seitz: *Der authentische Text der Leipziger Disputation*, 1903, pp. 14-54; 219-247.

[6] *Corpus Reformatorum*, i, 462.

[7] To Glapion, 1522, LB. ep. 645.

[8] To Pirckheimer, 1522, Lond. xxx, 28. LB. ep. 618. *Cf.* also Erasmus's defense of his position in his letter to Marcus Laurinus, Lond. xxiii, 6, LB. ep. 650. February 1, 1523.

all invitations from the emperor, the pope, and various kings, to write against the Wittenberg professor.[1] Doubtless his ideas were confirmed by the fact that denial of free will was mentioned as Luther's fundamental error in a letter of Henry VIII to Duke George of January 20, 1523, and in the latter's answer of May 8.[2]

In July, 1522, was published a pamphlet containing Melanchthon's "Statement Concerning Erasmus and Luther," and two letters of the latter about the former, one to Capito, January 17, 1522, and one to Borner or Cubito, of May 28, 1522;[3] this last containing a very disparaging estimate of the humanist's theological abilities:

> On predestination he knows less than the sophists of the schools. . . . He is not formidable in such matters, for truth is more powerful than eloquence. . . . I will not provoke Erasmus, nor, if provoked once and again, will I hit back. Yet it does not seem to me that he would do wisely to direct the force of his rhetoric against me, for I fear that he would not find Luther another Lefèvre d'Étaples concerning whom he boasts that all congratulate him on his victory.

In vain did mutual friends try to keep such letters from coming to the knowledge of the humanist; in vain did they warn the writer of them to be more careful.[4] When the Wittenberger continued to pen even harsher judgments, they were at once published. Such was a letter to Pellican at Basle, dated October 1, 1523, expressing regret that Hutten should have "expostulated" and that Erasmus should have "wiped off his aspersions with a sponge,"

> for if this is erasing with a sponge, what is cursing and reviling? . . . I see how far the man is from the knowledge of Christian things, and

[1] *Zwinglii opera*, viii, 114 ff. August 31, 1523.

[2] Zickendraht, pp. 15 f.

[3] Published under the title, *Iudicium D. Martini Lutheri de Erasmo, sine loco et anno; cf.* Enders, iii, p. 276. L. C. ep. 549. Zickendraht, p. 10.

[4] Luther's letter, just quoted, was forwarded by Ambrose Blaurer to his brother Thomas, begging him to see that it was shown to Erasmus. Thomas, however, returned the letter, warning Luther to be more careful. *Briefwechsel der Blaurer*, ed. T. Schiess, 1908 ff, i, 52.

therefore would easily suffer him to call me any name he likes, as long as he does not touch the cause, for I propose to defend that alone, and not my life or character.[1]

Erasmus knew these expressions and of course resented them. He complained bitterly of the "private letters published in hatred of me by those who fear to rage against the pope and emperor."[2]

On June 20, 1523, Luther wrote to Œcolampadius at Basle:[3]

I feel the pricks that Erasmus gives me; yet, as he dissimulates his hostility and does not call himself my foe, I also pretend that I do not notice his guile, although I understand it more deeply than he is aware. He has done what he was called to do; he has introduced the study of the tongues and called us from those other godless studies. Perhaps, like Moses, he will die in the land of Moab, for to come to the promised land of better pursuits is not his lot.

This letter was not published, but was shown by its recipient to its subject, who spoke of it to Zwingli on August 31st[4] and in an epistle to John Faber[5] saying that the Wittenberg Reformer had vehemently execrated the *Sponge* and had recently written to Œcolampadius that Erasmus was a Moses to be buried in the wilderness. "This," he concludes, "is the prelude to war."

With a heavy heart he at once began the composition of the *Diatribe on the Free Will*, though he feared that he could not publish it unless he should leave Germany.[6] As an encouragement, the new pope, Clement VII, whom he had known personally, sent him a present of two hundred florins; this he only consented to take on the express understanding that it was a reward for the

[1] Published in a work entitled *Iudicium Erasmi Alberi de Spongia Erasmi Roterodami*, Enders, iv, p. 233; L. C. ep. 600. Erasmus Alber was the author's real name, though he of Rotterdam suspected that it was a pseudonym to conceal Busch. Lond. xxx, 36; LB. ep. 684.

[2] In his *Catalogue of Lucubrations* (1524), Allen, i, pp. 28, 32.

[3] Enders, iv, 163. L.C. ep. 591.

[4] *Zwinglis Werke*, viii, ep. 315.

[5] Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, ii, no. 5 (p. 601) November 21, 1523.

[6] To Henry VIII, September 4, 1523, Lond. xx, 35; LB. ep. 657.

Paraphrases.[1] Nevertheless, early in 1524, some months before it was published, he sent manuscript drafts of the work to Clement[2] and to his old patron, Henry VIII.[3]

News of the attack, received at Rome with joy, created not a little dismay throughout Germany. Popular opinion was expressed in a short tract entitled, "Dialogue between a Peasant, Belial, Erasmus of Rotterdam, and Dr. John Faber, briefly showing the true reason that induced Erasmus and Faber to deny God's Word."[4] In this Belial is represented as rejoicing that he has "seduced not only some small, simple, worthless, apostate, desperate men to deny the truth, but has also so tempted and moved the master of beautiful Latin, that he neither sees nor understands what he has formerly said, written, and published abroad." Erasmus is then made to chime in, all complacency because he "has won and obtained more favor from the pope, cardinals, bishops, and other princes, than Luther and his fellows have done, who have got nothing but hatred, odium, and persecution from the same quarters."

Deep concern took possession of the Reformers when they heard of the captain marching against them. Capito had long ago foreseen and deprecated such a catastrophe,[5] while Luther keenly appreciated the harm

[1] On January 5, 1524, John Haner wrote Clement from Nuremberg, suggesting that a douceur for Erasmus would be advisable; Clement sent it with a letter of April 3, 1524. P. Balan: *Monumenta Reformationis Lutheranæ*, pp. 319, 324. Erasmus wrote Pirckheimer of it on July 21, 1524; Lond. xxx, 36; LB. ep. 684. His personal acquaintance with Clement is spoken of in a letter of 1523 to C. Stadion, Bishop of Basle, LB. ep. 661. *Cf.* also letter of August 26, 1527, *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, xxix, 1859, p. 595.

[2] Ennio Filonardo to Erasmus, Rome, April 14, 15, 1524. Förstemann-Günther, epp. 23, 24.

[3] Lond. xx, 49; LB. ep. 660, dated 1523; according to the old style, frequently employed by Erasmus, of beginning the year at Easter or on Lady Day (March 25th), this might mean any time before April, 1524.

[4] *Gesprächbüchlein von einem Bauern, Belial, Erasmo, und Doctor Johann Fabri. Flugschriften aus den ersten Jahren der Reformation*, hg. von O. Clemen, Band i, Heft 8, 1906. The date of this pamphlet is given as soon after the Recess of Nuremberg of April 18, 1524.

[5] Baum: *Capito und Butzer*, 1860, p. 84, quoting a letter of Capito to Erasmus dated June 5, 1522.

that the attack would do his cause. In order to intimidate an opponent rated as a coward, he at once indited the following insulting missive:[1]

> Since we see that the Lord has not given you courage and sense to assail those monsters openly and confidently with us, we are not the men to exact what is beyond your power and measure. . . . We only fear that you may be induced by our enemies to fall upon our doctrine with some publication, in which case we should be obliged to resist you to your face. . . . Hitherto I have controlled my pen as often as you prick me, and have written in letters to friends, which you have seen, that I would control it until you publish something openly. For although you will not side with us, and although you injure and make skeptical many pious men by your impiety and hypocrisy, yet I cannot and do not accuse you of willful obstinacy. . . . We have fought long enough; we must take care not to eat each other up. This would be a terrible catastrophe, as neither of us wishes to harm religion, and without judging each other both may do good.

Erasmus's answer, dated May 8th,[2] asserted that he was not less zealous for the cause of religion than were those who arrogated to themselves the name "evangelical," and that he had as yet written nothing against Luther, though had he done so he would have won the applause of the great ones of the world. He showed Luther's letter to Œcolampadius in order to secure his good offices as a peace-maker.[3] Melanchthon and Jonas were also eager to intercede, though the former dreaded the odium that a personal interview would excite.[4] To Pirckheimer Erasmus confided: "Martin Luther wrote me kindly, sending the letter by Camerarius. I did not dare to reply with equal kindness on account of the sycophants,"[5] and again: "Luther wrote me in his own manner, promising to overlook my weakness if I would not write expressly against his dogmas. I answered briefly but, as is my habit, courteously. There is now

[1] Enders, iv, 319; L. C. ep. 620. Dateless, to be put about April 15, 1524.
[2] Enders, iv, 335; L. C. ep. 624.
[3] Œcolampadius to Luther, May 8, 1524; Enders, iv, 339.
[4] Stromer to Erasmus, May 1, 1524; Enthoven, ep. 25. Erasmus to Pirckheimer, June 3 (1524), LB. App. ep. 327. Zickendraht, p. 20.
[5] July 21, 1524. Lond. xxx, 36. LB. ep. 684.

present a Baron Hieroslaus, ambassador of the king of Poland, a sincere friend of mine and very hostile to Luther, as is his king."[1]

Apropos of the visit of this nobleman, Hieroslaus Laski[2] who forever remained his faithful friend and disciple, Erasmus tells a long story in his *Catalogue of Lucubrations* (September, 1524).[3]

I took Laski to my library; he asked if Luther were learned; I replied in the affirmative. He then asked what I thought of the Reformer's dogmas, and received the reply that they were beyond my power to judge, but that he of Wittenberg had certainly taught much well and attacked abuses strongly. He then asked what books of Luther I most approved. I replied the *Commentaries on the Psalms* and the *Tesseradecas*,[4] adding that these were approved even by those that condemned the rest, "although even in these," I said, "he has mixed some of his own doctrine." He repeated "his own" and smiled. This was our first talk on Luther, in which neither he clearly saw my mind nor I his. When he visited me again, by chance there was a recent letter of Luther's lying on the table among my papers. From this he snatched a few words at a glance which showed him that Luther seemed to think meanly of me. While we were talking he tried to steal the letter. Pretending not to notice what he had done, I took it from his hands and replaced it on the table. . . . Later he confessed he had tried to steal it. I asked him why. He said that many would persuade his king that Erasmus was in league with Luther. "I will inform you," said I; "I will give you his autograph, lest he should pretend that it is a copy, and I will add two others,[5] of which one has recently been printed at Strassburg, the other I know not where, in which he speaks hatefully of me." "By these," I said, "you can show the emperor (for he was ambassador to the emperor) that my relationship with Luther is not so close as some declare." Then he asked me if I were going to write against Luther, but I said I had no time. Then he told me that the king of Poland was so hostile to Luther that he confiscated all the property of any man in whose house was found a book of Luther. I disapproved this cruelty and also this searching of people's houses. Departing, Laski gave me a silver vase, which I would have refused, but he pressed it on me.

[1] June 3 (1524), LB. App. ep. 327.
[2] Miaskowski: *Die Korrespondenz des Erasmus mit Polen*, 1901.
[3] Allen, i, 31 ff.
[4] Erasmus Latinizes the name "opus de quattuordecim spectris."
[5] *I. e.* those to Borner, May 28, 1522, and to Pellican, October 1, 1523.

Shortly after this he published his *Diatribe on the Free Will.* The composition of it had been completed on May 13th,[1] as was announced to Luther two days later by Œcolampadius. At first the author thought of keeping it in manuscript, but by July 21st,[2] he decided to publish it, as the rumor of his having written it was out and people might think it worse than it was. "For I treat the matter with such moderation that I know even Luther will not be angry." His moderation he intended to show even in the title, for at that time and in Greek "diatribe" meant "conversation" or "discussion," and not, as it now does in English, "bitter criticism," or "invective." Just as the work saw the light he wrote elsewhere:[3]

> I have never renounced the friendship of anyone either because he was inclined to Luther or because he was against him. For I am of such a nature that I could love even a Jew, were he only a pleasant companion and friend and did not blaspheme Christ in my presence. Moreover I think courtesy more effective in discussion.

Thus conceived, the *Discussion of Free Will*[4] came from the press of Froben in September, 1524.[5] The original intention to dedicate it to Wolsey was given up by the author as likely to make it seem the work of a toady.

Of all the many books of metaphysical divinity composed during the last four centuries, *The Diatribe on the Free Will* is one of the very few still readable on account of its brevity, its moderation, and its wit. The author's irony, as well as the force of his destructive criticism, is nowhere better revealed than in the introductory section of his pamphlet, not on the main question itself, but on the principles of judging. Admitting the Bible as the

[1] Enders, iv, 343.

[2] To Pirckheimer, Lond. xxx, 36; LB. ep. 684.

[3] *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, Allen, i, 17.

[4] Text LB. ix, 1215 ff. Best edition: *De Libero Arbitrio Διατριβή sive Collatio per D. Erasmum Roterodamum*, hg. von J. von Walter, 1910. On the date of publication, *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, i, 20; Walter, *Einleitung*, xii ff.

[5] To Clement VII, February 13, 1524; Lond. xix, 1; LB. ep. 670. To Giberti, September 2, Lond. xxi, 5; LB. ep. 694.

standard authority, he shows that many things in the Bible are hard to understand, and none harder than the very question at issue. The strong penchant of the theologian to read his own ideas into the Scripture is seldom expressed with finer psychological insight than in the observation: "Whatever men read in the Bible they distort into an assertion of their own opinion, just as lovers incessantly imagine that they see the object of their love wherever they turn." The solution of the enigma of free choice may be left by Providence to the Last Judgment, but in any case man's duty is plain, "If we be in the way of piety, let us hasten on to better things; if involved in sin, let us find the remedy of repentance." Even if we have arrived at the true view, it may be inexpedient to proclaim it; who, for example, would longer strive to do good if he knew that he had really no option in the matter? Moreover, salvation is not prejudiced by ignorance in these obscure matters; how much rather has piety been damaged by the strife over useless questions, such as that of the immaculate conception! These battles must remain largely undecided, for there is no umpire. While both sides appeal to Scripture and to "solid reasons," no one can tell surely what Scripture means. If the sense is as clear as some people say, why have so many people differed in interpreting it? If they appeal to the guidance of the Spirit, what proof do they offer that they are under infallible inspiration? If you appeal to miracles, they talk as if there had been no Christianity for thirteen hundred years. If you ask for a good life, they claim to be justified by faith, not by works.

Having thus set forth the difficulties in the way of arriving at the demonstration of absolute truth, the author grapples with the main problem. Various shades of determinist opinion are set forth: it is hard to say—as does Carlstadt—that the will has power only to sin; it is much harder—with Luther, Wyclif, and a few Manichaeans—to deny the existence of free will altogether.

Nevertheless, people may differ without heresy on this point or on that, and as Luther, particularly, differs from almost everyone, he cannot object if Erasmus differs now and then from him. Possibly his words in this matter are hyperbolic; he may overstate his opinion, as he apparently does when, in order to guard against the abuse of hagiolatry, he denies that the good deeds of the saints have any merit whatever. Such paradoxes may be pardonable as a means of arousing attention, but they cannot be taken seriously as articles of faith.

Free will, defined as the power to apply oneself to the things that make for salvation, is proved by two arguments: first, that without it repentance would be senseless and punishment for sin unjust, and, secondly, by adducing the biblical texts that declare, or imply, man's freedom to choose, and his responsibility to a God desirous rather of his conversion than of his death. Other passages of Scripture, the author frankly admits, seem to militate the other way, as do the texts referring to the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, the story of Jacob and Esau, Romans ix, and John xv: 5. These sayings can, however, be explained away better than the others, and perhaps only indicate that God's grace has much to do with man's choice, even though it is not the only factor involved. In short, sums up the writer, "the opinion of those who attribute much to grace but something to free will pleases me best." God helps the man as a father supports the first steps of a young child; only, God does not do it all.

Erasmus lost no time in sending his book to powerful patrons. With the copy for Duke George of Saxony he sent a letter saying that he had not written against Luther before because he had hitherto regarded him as a necessary evil, a drastic antidote to the corruptions of the time.[1] The duke replied at once,[2] praising the

[1] F. Gess: *Akten und Briefe zur Kirchenpolitik Herzog Georgs von Sachsen*, 1905, i, ep. 723, with correct date September 6, 1524; in LB. ep. 695 with date September 4. L. C. ep. 634.

[2] Gess, ep. 742, written from Leipzig between October 3 and October 8, 1524.

Diatribe and sending Luther's *Monastic Vows*, with a request for a refutation of that. Erasmus read the book, which he thought very garrulous, but did not reply to it. Probably at Duke George's suggestion his protégé Cochlæus translated the Erasmian pamphlet into German. This the author disapproved, alleging the shortcomings of the version, but probably also because he did not care to argue his case before the unlearned public. In several letters to Cochlæus he blames the passionate, personal tone of his polemic and his carelessness in statements of facts.[1]

To his English patrons, Henry VIII, Wolsey, and Cuthbert Tunstall, he also sent copies.[2] Vives wrote him shortly afterward that he had found the king reading it with much evident delight.[3]

Pope Clement also received a printed copy, with a letter protesting against Aleander's hostile actions.[4] He gave the messenger ten ducats,[5] but, having already rewarded the author, apparently sent nothing more at this time.

Like most controversial tracts on burning issues, the *Diatribe* was hailed by the partisans of the side it defended as a masterpiece, whereas its enemies found it an utter failure. Ulrich Zasius reported a highly favorable opinion of it,[6] and his own oration against Luther at the University of Freiburg was probably much influenced by it.[7] Influenced by him, the University of Freiburg condemned Luther in a memorial dated Octo-

[1] M. Spahn: *J. Cochlæus*, 1898, pp. 124, 140.

[2] Lond. xviii, 48, 51, 52. LB. epp. 606, 697, 702. September 4 and 6.

[3] LB. ep. 780, November 13, 1524 (not 1525). Also found in *Auctarium Epistolarum Vivis*, an appendix to Lond., ep. 13, and in *Vivis Opera*, vii, 180.

[4] To John Matthew Giberti, Datary, September 2, 1524. Lond. xxi, 5; LB. ep. 694. Another letter to Giberti, dated October 13, in P. Balan: *Monumenta Reformationis Lutheranæ*, 1884, p. 380.

[5] L. Pastor: *History of the Popes*, English translation, ed. by Kerr, x, 337. The entry in the papal account-book is dated October 24, 1524.

[6] *U. Zasii epistolæ*, ed. Riegger, p. 71. To Boniface Amerbach, September 19, 1524.

[7] *Ibid*, p. 78 (1524).

ber 12, 1524.[1] Calcagnini wrote from Ferrara *On the Free Motion of the Soul*, praising the work of Erasmus and blaming the author for his long delay in writing it.[2]

The Reformers, however, with the exception of Melanchthon, disliked the Erasmian pamphlet. Melanchthon wrote that it had been received at Wittenberg with equanimity, for it would be tyranny to forbid difference of opinion on such subjects, and that even Luther did not object to the caustic wit, because he believed the discussion would be profitable to many.[3]

If we inquire of Doctor Martin himself what was his opinion of the *Diatribe*, we shall find it hardly as favorable as reported by his friend. He once said that of all the books written against him by the papists this was the only one he had read through, and that even this he often felt, while he read it, like throwing under the bench.[4] On November 1, 1524, he wrote that he was so disgusted with it that he could hardly get beyond the first thirty pages, and that he was ashamed to answer so unlearned a book of so learned a man.[5] His resolve[6] to answer, however, lest his followers be led astray, was strengthened by the appeals of Capito and the other Strassburg preachers, who compared Erasmus to the Scyrian she-goat of his own proverb;[7] this animal had kicked the man whom she had fed with her milk and thus wiped out by this nasty sequel the memory of her previous kindness.

He was unable to reply at once, however, on account of his preoccupations with the Peasants' Revolt, with a

[1] The theological matter in this was largely taken, however, from the bull *Exsurge Domine* and from the censure of the University of Paris. See E. Krek in *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Beförderer der Geschichtskunde von Freiburg*, xxxvi, 58-67, 1921.

[2] *C. Calcagnini Opera Aliquot*, 1544, pp. 395 f. Dedication to Bonaventura Pistophilus, January 3, 1525.

[3] September 30, 1524. Lond. xix, 2. LB. ep. 704, L. C. ep. 637.

[4] *Tischreden*, Weimar, vi, no. 6850, apparently of late date.

[5] Enders, v, 46.

[6] Enders v, 52. L. C. ep. 645.

[7] Enders, v, 66 f.

controversy over the sacrament with Carlstadt, and with other things, until late in 1525.[1] He was finally brought to it, if he does not jest in saying so, by the requests of his newly married wife and of Camerarius.[2] In September he began seriously to work on his reply,[3] which was finished by the end of the year.[4]

Erasmus was surprised at the long delay in receiving his answer, and attributed it to Luther's marriage, over which he made merry. "Troubles in comedies," said he[5] "are wont to end in a wedding, with peace to all." The marriage he thought timely, for he heard that Luther's wife had borne him a son ten days after it. Therefore said he, Luther begins to be milder now, for the fiercest beasts are tamed by their females. He later confessed the rumor about the child false[6] and added that he was skeptical of the old legend that the antichrist would be born of a monk and a nun, or else there would have been many antichrists already.

The Bondage of the Will,[7] is, much more than was *The Free Will*, a polemic with a distinct purpose. There is another difference in the apparently greater earnestness of the reformer; what to the Wittenberg professor is a matter of life and death had been to the humanist the subject of an interesting conversation. It is in this sense that he attributes eloquence and skill in words to Erasmus, but real knowledge of the point at issue to himself.

If Erasmus's moderation, which he attributed to doubt, rather increased than assuaged his anger, the assertion

[1] Enders, v, 100, 105, 125.
[2] Kroker: *Luthers Tischreden in den Mathesischen Sammlung*. 1903, no. 212.
[3] Enders v. 245, 257, 249. L. C. ep. 704.
[4] Enders v. 294. L. C. ep. 722.
[5] To N. Everard, Chief Justice of Holland. December 24, 1525. LB. ep. 781. Luther's marriage took place June 13th. Erasmus speaks of the news again in a letter to Lupset (Lond. xviii, 11; L. B. ep. 790) saying that Luther has married a wonderfully charming poor girl of a family of Borna. Katie von Bora was not at all pretty.
[6] To Silvius. March 13, 1526. Lond. xviii, 22. LB. ep. 801.
[7] *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, xviii, 551 ff. *De servo arbitrio.*

that many texts in the Bible are contradictory made him perfectly furious. To him the Scripture, as the inspired and sufficient rule of faith and practice, was a single unit; each text must be taken literally and yet all must be made to agree, for infallible wisdom could not contradict itself. To the expressed doubt about the necessity and importance of deciding such dogmatic questions he answered with a counter-assertion of their supreme significance; to the charge that uproar followed the proclamation of untimely truths he replied that this is one of the very signs of the preaching of the Word.

After this lengthy introduction Luther expounded his argument for determinism, based not, as that of a modern thinker might be, on any conviction of the reign of unalterable law, but solely on the ground of the all-sufficiency (monergism) of God's grace and the impotence of the natural man to choose the good. Following Augustine in the assertion that God inclines men's hearts either to good or to evil according to their foreseen merits,[1] and that God even wills them to sin in order to punish them,[2] Luther proclaimed in the strongest terms the total impotency of the natural man:

> The human will is like a beast of burden.[3] If God mounts it, it wishes and goes as God wills; if Satan mounts it, it wishes and goes as Satan wills. Nor can it choose its rider, nor betake itself to him it would prefer, but it is the riders who contend for its possession.[4] . . . This is the acme of faith, to believe that God, who saves so few and condemns so many, is merciful; that he is just who has made us necessarily doomed to damnation, so that, as Erasmus says, he seems to delight in the tortures of the wretched, and to be

[1] Augustine: *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, cap. 20.

[2] Augustine: *Contra Julianum*, lib. 5, cap. 3, §§ 10–13.

[3] This simile of God as the rider of the will comes from Augustine or pseudo-Augustine, *Libri III Hypomnesticum contra Pelagium*. It was cited as Augustine's by Eck in the Leipzig Debate, O. Seitz: *Der authentische Text der Leipziger Disputation*, p. 28. Whether the work was really by Augustine has been doubted. *Cf.* A. V. Müller: *Luthers theologische Quellen*, 1912, p. 207. The simile is also found in Raymund de Sabunde, tit. 246-248. *Cf. Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, xxxv, 135 f.

[4] This idea of the contest of the good and evil spirits reminds one of Erasmus's saying that the Manichæans had rejected the free will.

more deserving of hatred than of love. If by any effort of reason I could conceive how God, who shows so much anger and iniquity, could be merciful and just, there would be no need of faith. . . . God foreknows nothing subject to contingencies,[1] but he foresees, foreordains, and accomplishes all things by an unchanging, eternal, and efficacious will. By this thunderbolt free will sinks shattered in the dust.

The argument, of course, is based chiefly on biblical texts, especially such as that about God hardening Pharaoh's heart, the saying that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, and the case of Judas, whose sin, being foreseen, was bound to take place. In order to reconcile the idea of an inexorable Almighty God, predisposing all things, even sin, with the idea of a God of love as revealed in Jesus, Luther distinguished two divine wills, one hidden and one revealed. This was his theodicy.

Luther's tract, though not the only answer to Erasmus, threw all others into the shade. Francis Lambert, the French Reformer, had already written a book on *The Captive Will*, directed against the humanist, though not naming him.[2] Bugenhagen prepared a reply, but suppressed it because "he wished Erasmus well, saving God's truth," and because his greater friend had already taken up the cudgels.[3] Capito, too, designed an answer to the man whom he now thought of as doing all he could to destroy faith, but he also retired from the field because of discouragement from Luther.[4]

The Bondage of the Will, first printed in December, 1525, had a wide sale, seven Latin and two German editions being called for within a year.[5] The author

[1] This against Valla, who said that, though a man's will was free, his voluntary act was foreknown. E. Maier: *Die Willensfreiheit bei L. Valla*, 1911. Luther's words would also apply to Aquinas, but he apparently knew little of this author.

[2] Herminjard: *Correspondance des Réformateurs des Pays de la Langue Française*, 9 vols., 1866-97, i, 348.

[3] O. Vogt: *Bugenhagens Briefwechsel*, 1888, p. 21.

[4] Capito to Bugenhagen, October 8, 1525, *ibid*, p. 35.

[5] *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, xviii, 551 ff; introduction to the *De Servo Arbitrio*. Only four Latin editions and two German are given in the *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, iii, 37. Erasmus once spoke of ten editions before the end of 1526.

himself was much pleased with it, remarking at one time that he would be content to have all his books perish save the *Catechisms* and the *Bondage of the Will*. His friend, Justus Jonas, a quondam Erasmian, now convinced that, though his former master was still "a valuable, high-minded man, yet his book on the Free Will was offensive and contrary to the Gospel,"[1] hastened to translate Luther's work into German. Like all other controversial pamphlets, it was judged mainly from the partisan standpoint, though here and there it carried conviction even into hostile minds. The humanist of Munster, James Montanus, a friend of the Rotterdamer, opined that Erasmus in the *Diatribe* had misunderstood Luther and that he could not possibly refute his answer.[2] Considering that *The Bondage of the Will* was the chief fountain and source of Calvin's tremendous doctrine of predestination and election, it is not too much to reckon it as one of the most important of sixteenth-century works.

Luther sent his treatise to his opponent with a letter,[3] now lost, expressing arrogant confidence in his own opinion. Erasmus, stung to the quick, replied as follows:[4]

> Your letter was delivered to me late and had it come on time it would not have moved me. . . . The whole world knows your nature, according to which you have guided your pen against no one more bitterly and, what is more detestable, more maliciously than against me. . . . The same admirable ferocity which you formerly used against Cochlæus and against Fisher, who provoked you to it by reviling, you now use against my book in spite of its courtesy. How do your scurrilous charges that I am an atheist, an Epicurean, and a skeptic help the argument? . . . It terribly pains me, as it must all good men, that your arrogant, insolent, rebellious nature has set the world in arms. . . . You treat the Evangelic cause

[1] On this *op. cit.*, and Jonas's letter to Albert Count of Mansfeld in Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas*, i, ep. 93.

[2] Montanus to Pirckheimer, January 9, 1525, and April 23, 1526. *Zeitschrift für vaterländische [Westfalens] Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, Münster, 1914, Band lxxii, pp. 27, 35 f.

[3] On it *cf.* Erasmus to Wolsey, April 25, 1526. LB. ep. 810. Lond. xxi, 33.

[4] Enders v. 334; Lond. xxi, 28; LB. ep. 806. L. C. ep. 729.

so as to confound together all things sacred and profane as if it were your chief aim to prevent the tempest from ever becoming calm, while it is my greatest desire that it should die down. . . . I should wish you a better disposition were you not so marvelously satisfied with the one you have. Wish me any curse you will except your temper, unless the Lord change it for you.

Bitter complaints about Luther's acerbity, and about the unfairness of having a German version which would excite the vulgar artisans and to which he could not reply, overflow the humanist's correspondence at this time.[1] On March 2d he even wrote the Elector John of Saxony, demanding the protection of the laws against Luther's accusations of atheism.[2] The elector at once forwarded[3] the missive to Luther for advice, which he received to the effect that "his Grace should not let himself mix in the affair, as the viper asks, but should reply, according as he himself well knows, that his Grace neither can nor should be a judge in spiritual affairs."[4]

Erasmus believed that the book had been composed by the combined efforts of "the church of Wittenberg"—he had Melanchthon especially in mind—and that it had been sent him late by the author on purpose so that he could not answer it before the great Frankfort book fair.[5] However, having been early supplied with a copy by a friend in Leipzig[6]—probably Duke George—he set about with tremendous energy to frustrate this plan, completing his answer in twelve days, and engaging Froben to work six presses at once, turning out twenty-

[1] To Gattinara, April 29, 1526. *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie*, xxix, 1859, p. 693.

[2] Unpublished letter in the Weimar archives, of which extracts are given in Enders, v. 342. The German copy of the letter is dated March 13th.

[3] Enders, v. 340.

[4] De Wette: *Luthers Briefe*, 1825 ff, iii, 105; Enders, v. 344.

[5] To Michael, Bishop of Langres, March 13, 1526. Lond. xviii, 24; LB. ep. 800.

[6] *Cf.* letter of George to Erasmus, February 13, 1526. Gess: *Akten und Briefe*, ep. 39, and Erasmus to Emser. Lond. xviii, 28 (with wrong date 1527 for 1526).

four pages a day. Consequently, the first part of the *Hyperaspistes*[1] appeared about March, 1526. It is a full defense of the *Diatribe*, being three times larger than that work. In it, however, the question of the will recedes in importance behind the larger subject of the excellence of the Evangelical doctrine. Erasmus cannot persuade himself of the beneficial effect of the Reformation, Luther's person being the chief cause. He blames his opponent with having caused the peasant's revolt and with his cruel book against the peasants. He reproaches the reform also with the lack of unity among the leaders, especially with the quarrel between Luther and Carlstadt. He promises to answer *The Bondage of the Will* more fully later, and warmly defends himself from the charges of skepticism.

This work also enjoyed much popularity, being reprinted at least four times in 1526 and translated into German by Jerome Emser, the protégé of Duke George.[2] This nobleman was much pleased with the work as he wrote its author on April 16th.[3] His councilor, Pistorius,[4] also wrote on April 19th urging him to continue with his good work and, in order to help him, had some of the Reformer's German books translated into Latin, so that Erasmus might refute all the errors contained in them.

The emperor also wrote on November 9, 1526, from Granada, congratulating Erasmus on becoming at last *ex professo* an enemy of Luther and exhorting him to continue.[5] A second letter of a year later, again expressed the monarch's pleasure that Erasmus had dissociated himself from Luther's madness, and exonerated Erasmus from all error save a few human slips.[6]

[1] LB., x, 1249. Preface dated February 20, 1526.

[2] Emser had published Erasmus's *Rythmi in laudem Annæ Aviæ Jesu* in 1515. See J. Truhlár: *Catalogus manuscriptorum in Bibliotheca Universitatis Pragensis*, 1906, no. 2771. *Cf. Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, 109–110, and Emser's tracts published in *Corpus Catholicorum*, i, 4, p. 54 (1921).

[3] Horawitz, *Erasmiana*, I, ep. 10. Gess, ii, 527.

[4] LB. App. ep. 336.

[5] Brewer: *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, iv, No. 604.

[6] December 13, 1527. LB. ep. 1915.

Yet it was with a heavy heart that he continued his work. On June 6, 1526, he wrote Pirckheimer that, although Luther left no place for friendship, he seemed to restrain his wrath, and that in writing against him he knew that he aided some who would rather see Erasmus dead than the Reformer himself.[1]

That, indeed, he decided to publish the second half of the *Hyperaspistes* was perhaps due to the importunity of his English friends[2] and to a renewal of the quarrel between Luther and Henry VIII. The Reformer had had the poor judgment to write a humble letter to his royal enemy, offering to make public apology for his former polemic.[3] After a long delay the king answered with a fiercer missive than before,[4] accusing him of all his old errors and of a variety of crimes, including the incitement to the peasants' war and living in wantonness with a nun. This letter was edited and translated by Emser, who sent a copy of it to Erasmus December 25, 1526, begging him to publish the rest of his *Hyperaspistes* and saying that by not doing so he made himself suspected.[5]

Under these combined stimuli Erasmus finally decided to bring out a comprehensive work against the Reformation, studying a number of the Wittenberg professor's books with care. The *Hyperaspistes II* is six times as large as the *Diatribe*, being not only a careful refutation of *The Bondage of the Will* but an attack all along the line. A lengthy excursus is devoted to the quarrel with Henry VIII, Luther's reply to the letter last mentioned having given special offense. Erasmus definitely breaks with the reform at last and predicts that no name will be more hated by posterity than will Luther's. He finds

[1] Lond. xxx, 44. LB. ep. 823.

[2] More wrote him from Greenwich, December 18, 1526, urging him to do so. LB. App. ep. 334.

[3] September 1, 1525. Enders, v. 229. L. C. ep. 700.

[4] *Epistola Martini Lutheri. . . . Responsio dicti regis.* Dresden. 1527. L. C. ep. 737.

[5] Förstemann und Günther, ep. 56.

fault especially with the absolutism of the professor, "who never recoils from extremes." For himself he is a humanist, who believes that reason reveals truth as well as Scripture, and who "like nature, abhors portents." Indeed, it has been said,[1] with no more exaggeration than is pardonable in any brief generalization, that the controversy was fundamentally not so much on the subject of the will as on the claims of revealed versus natural religion. Luther feared that the absolute claim of Christianity would be compromised. In short this work reveals better than any other the fundamental difference in the ἦθος of the two men.

When the *Hyperaspistes Part II* appeared about September 1, 1527, Erasmus sent a copy at once to the emperor,[2] with a request for protection against the now enraged Lutherans, and to Duke George with a letter protesting that nothing had ever been so tedious to him as reading Luther's works.[3] The nobleman, while pleased at Erasmus's efforts to overturn Luther, could not wholly rid himself of the idea that, after all, the two champions were much of a sort, and that Erasmus was still in doubt about Luther's spirit.[4] To Maldonato Erasmus sent what was perhaps the most perfect statement of his position:[5]

> While I was fighting against these monsters [the enemies of learning] a fairly equal battle, lo! suddenly Luther arose and threw the apple of discord into the world. . . . I brought it about that humanism, which among the Italians and especially among the Romans savored of nothing but pure paganism, began nobly to celebrate Christ, in whom, if we are true Christians, we ought to boast as the one author of both wisdom and happiness. . . . I always avoided the

[1] R. Will: *La Liberté Chrétienne chez Luther*, 1922, p. 32 ff.

[2] Lond. xx, 5; LB. ep. 895.

[3] Lond. xix, 47; LB. ep. 889. *Cf.* his letter to Vergara complaining that he had almost died of reading the taunts, grimaces, insults, boasts, jeers, and cries of triumph in Luther's books. Lond. xx, 14; LB. ep. 893.

[4] J. Cæsarius to J. Lang, Leipzig, October 11, 1527. K. und W. Krafft: *Briefe und Dokumente aus der Zeit der Reformation*, 1875, p. 154. See George to Erasmus, January 1, 1527. F. Gess: *Akten und Briefe*, ii, no. 681.

[5] March 30, 1527. *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, pp. 629 f.

character of a dogmatist, except in certain *obiter dicta* which seemed to me likely to correct studies and the preposterous judgments of men. The world was put into a deeper slumber by ceremonies than it could have been by mandrake; monks, or rather, pseudo-monks, reigned in the consciences of men, for they had bound them on purpose in inextricable knots.

Luther never deigned to answer the *Hyperaspistes*—though in his private letters he punned on the name as if it meant "super-viperine"[1]—for he thought that a reply would do too much honor to one "who should be condemned rather than refuted, as he mocked all religion like his dear Lucian."[2] The other reformers, even Melanchthon,[3] resented the attack. Jonas now called his once loved master "an old fox,"[4] and another member of the group, Mark Forster, published a *Judgment of the recently published Books on the Will vainly called Free and truly called Bound*, giving the palm of victory to the Wittenberger.[5]

Erasmus's private letters, those never published by himself, prove that he kept *au courant* with Luther's doings and writings. At one time he asked to see the tract *On the Turkish War*;[6] at another time to have procured the pamphlet *On the Keys of the Church*, if in Latin.[7] His friend and the Reformer's bitterest enemy, Duke George of Albertine Saxony, continued to supply him with literature and to do his best to spur him to new efforts in defense of the faith. The Wittenberg professor wrote to the duke on December 21, 1525,[8] hoping to make him a convert, but received a tart reply bidding

[1] Enders, vi, 103, 105, 110. L. C. epp. 728, 777.
[2] To Montanus, May 28, 1529; Enders vii, 105; L. C. ep. 834.
[3] To Luther, October 2, 1527. Enders vi, 97; L. C. ep. 730.
[4] Jonas to Lang, October 17, 1527, Kawerau: *Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas*, ep. 107.
[5] *De Libellis vane Liberi et vere Servi Arbitrii nuper æditis Judicium Marci Fürstheri.* Dated Wittenberg, March 17, 1526. Reprinted in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, 1911, pp. 136 ff.
[6] *Epistolæ ad Amerbachium*, no. 29, no date. *The Turkish War* was written in 1529.
[7] *Ibid.* no. 2. The *Keys* was written in 1530.
[8] Enders v, 281; Gess ii, 459; L. C. ep. 720.

him keep his gospel to himself.[1] When this correspondence was forwarded to Erasmus, he read the duke's letter with pleasure, but even then replied to him, much to his disgust, that it was difficult to regard Luther's spirit as either a wholly good or a wholly evil one.[2] The course of events, however, turned him ever more strongly against the Protestants, and when Luther wrote a violent pamphlet entitled *Of Secret and Stolen Letters*, accusing Duke George of robbing the mails, Erasmus confessed that the impudence and scurrility of the invective had alienated him more from the author than a hundred books by his enemies would have done,[3] and he even sent a protest to Melanchthon.[4] At another time he entered a vain protest to the Elector John against his subject's treatment of priests and monks;[5] and he also narrowly escaped becoming involved in the war of pens which arose over the spurious treaty forged by Dr. Otto von Pack.[6]

It is fairly astonishing, after all that Erasmus had done to clear his skirts of the Reformation, that he should still have been appealed to from time to time as an umpire or a peacemaker. While the extremists of both parties reviled him, moderate Catholic and Protestant alike turned to him for final judgment; he was treated alternately as an outlaw and as the arbiter of Christendom. So, when the great Diet of Augsburg was opened by the emperor in 1530, with the express purpose—though the hope proved fallacious—of reconciling the contending parties, Erasmus was plied with letters from both sides, urging him to use his influence in favor

[1] Enders v, 285; Gess ii, 472 (with many corrections); L. C. ep. 721.

[2] Lond. xviii, 6; LB. ep. 991. With wrong date September 2, 1527, for 1526. *Cf.* Horawitz: *Erasmiana* (*Sitzunberichte der Wiener Akademie*, xc), p. 412.

[3] Erasmus to Duke George, June 30, 1530. Lond. xxv, 29; LB. ep. 1113. On the controversy between Luther and Duke George, see P. Smith: *Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, p. 225.

[4] *Corpus Reformatorum*, ii, 288.

[5] Erasmus to Maldonato, March 30, 1527. *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, p. 538.

[6] Förstemann-Günther, ep. 83. On this affair, Smith, *Life of Luther*, 224 f.

of compromise.[1] Himself hoping that the Diet would extirpate heresy while avoiding war,[2] he wrote to influential friends urging a peaceful course and approving certain reforms, such as the eucharist administered in both kinds, the marriage of priests, and the regulation or abolition of private masses. It was even reported that he had written to the emperor that the matter was too great to be hastily dispatched, and that reforms should begin at home.[3]

The rumor that he was actually invited by the emperor to make peace[4] was, however, unfounded, but the protagonists of both parties appealed to him. Luther, as an outlaw, did not appear at Augsburg, and the leadership of the Protestants therefore fell upon Melanchthon, who had always cultivated friendly relations with Erasmus. He wrote to him more than once, complaining of the ferocity of Eck, the Catholic leader, speaking of the moderation of the princes and praying him to use his influence for peace.[5] Erasmus replied that no one but God could compose this tragedy, even if ten councils met, that he had never written to the emperor, nor been summoned by him, but that he had written to Campeggio, to the Bishop of Augsburg, and to other friends in the sense Melanchthon wished. He added, in two letters, that Melanchthon would most profit the cause by prevailing with Luther to forgo his obstinate reviling and provocation of the princes.[6]

[1] Choler to Erasmus, February 3, 1530, Enthoven, no. 80; Susquetus to Erasmus, August 31, 1530, *ibid*, no. 87. John von Vlatten, secretary of the Duke of Cleves, to Erasmus, Förstemann-Günther, no. 130. Pistorius to Erasmus, June 27, 1530, *ibid*, no. 128.

[2] Lond. xxv, 29; LB. ep. 1113. June 30, 1530.

[3] Justus Jonas to Luther, Augsburg, July 28, 1530. Enders, xvii, 265.

[4] Enthoven no. 87. Also Melanchthon to Luther, Enders viii, 63. The falsity of the rumor is proved by Erasmus's letters to Melanchthon, *Cor. Ref.* ii, 288 and 244; Melanchthon to Erasmus, ii, 232.

[5] Melanchthon to Erasmus, August 1, 1530. *Melanchthonis Epistolæ* Lond., 1642, i, 114. LB. 1125.

[6] LB. epp. 117 and 1126. *Corpus Ref.* ii, 288. Erasmus to Melanchthon, July 7, August 2, and August 18, 1530. Luther was kept informed of the less offensive parts of Erasmus's letters. Enders viii, 202.

Eck also, notwithstanding an order from the Bishop of Vienna to keep quiet,[1] was after Erasmus, plying him not to use his influence for peace, but to hunt out the foxes from the vineyard of the Lord. For his part, he said, he tried rather to displease than to please the heretics; he had found 3,000 errors in Luther's books, of which he had selected 400 to publish at the Diet.[2] Eck's uncompromising spirit was still further revealed by a letter from John Henckel, confessor to Queen Maria of Hungary, the emperor's sister, speaking of a conference with Eck in which that theologian had violently blamed him for having seen Melanchthon, notwithstanding which he had since interviewed Bucer and Capito.[3] Erasmus hardly thought it worth while to remonstrate with so belligerent a person, but did write an earnest plea for peace to Cardinal Campeggio.[4] Besides the miseries which follow war, and with which the world has so long been plagued, he urged that its issue would be extremely doubtful; that not only would the emperor be in danger, but that the Church herself would suffer, as the people would be persuaded that the pope was responsible. Much as he detests the sectaries, he thinks the peace of the world should be preferred even to giving them their desserts. Nor should the Church be despaired of, for her condition was no worse than it had been under Arcadius and Theodosius.

The attempts to arrive at a solid agreement were fruitless. The Protestants were allowed to read their *Confession* on June 25th, but a refutation of this was forthcoming, and the Catholic majority voted that they must recant before the 15th of the following April, or they would be proceeded against as schismatics.[5]

The part played by Erasmus in the popular imagina-

[1] John Faber to Erasmus, June 21, 1531. Enthoven, no. 92.
[2] Eck to Erasmus, September 18, 1530. Lond. xxx, 80. LB. 1141.
[3] October 1, 1530. Förstemann-Günther, no. 137.
[4] August 18, 1530. LB. ep. 1129.
[5] Erasmus speaks of this in a letter to Antony Dalbonius, Abbot at Lyons. November 27, 1530. Lond. xxv, 41. LB. 1147.

tion was well depicted by a comedy enacted at Augsburg representing the progress of the Reformation.[1] A personage dressed as a doctor (Reuchlin) came in with a bundle of fagots, which he threw on the ground. Erasmus then entered, tried to pick them up, but, not succeeding, arranged them in the form of a pyre and then fled. Enter Luther, who set fire to the wood. Then a personage in the imperial insignia tried to put the fire out by beating it with his sword, but only made it burn the brighter. Then the pope arrived with two buckets, one of oil and one of water, and poured the first on the flame, which naturally made it assume enormous proportions. After three representations of this farce the authorities thought it time to intervene, but the actors had time to flee before they were discovered.

Even after the close of the Diet of Augsburg several appeals were made to Erasmus to act as arbitrator. One of these came from Julius Pflug, one of the most admirable of the Catholic divines, who wrote from Leipzig, May 12, 1531,[2] saying that if Erasmus would intercede with Melanchthon, or with some other good man, he thought that on the Catholic side some concessions might be made, for the sake of expediency, even of things undesirable in themselves. Erasmus replied that he was sick and tired of mediating, feeling like the man who in trying to separate two gladiators met his death.[3] He had formerly interceded with the emperor, with Gattinara, and with Adrian, but all in vain. As for Melanchthon, he was liked even by his opponents and did his best for conciliation at Augsburg.

A year later an urgent appeal came from George Wicel, an enthusiastic young Catholic with reforming tendencies.[4] He addressed Erasmus in terms of the highest praise,[5] as the man who understood religion the

[1] Meyer, 144, note 3.
[2] Lond. xxvii, l. LB. 1186.
[3] August 20, 1531. Lond. xxvii, 2. LB. 1195.
[4] On him see G. Kawerau in *Realencyklopädie*.
[5] His letter, Frankfort, September 8, 1532. Förstemann-Günther, no. 178.

best and who watched over it most carefully, who spent most for it and who was able to help it the most. A picture of the evils of the sects was followed by an exhortation to work for the Church: "Stimulate the princes to consider the matter. . . . Counsel, propose methods, pray, conjure, and sweat that the Church be given back to Christ."

Wicel followed up this letter by another, dated March 30, 1533, expressing his desire for a general council, his trust that Charles V would moderate the Curia, and his belief that Luther's ferocity was moderating: "We hope that you, Erasmus, will be our Solon, by whose arbitrament each party would give up something for the sake of avoiding strife."[1]

In pursuance of these appeals, particularly as he judged that by this time the sects were growing milder,[2] Erasmus wrote, in 1533, his *Book on Mending the Peace of the Church and on Quieting Dissent*,[3] dedicating it to Julius Pflug; he recommended tolerance in trifles, the prohibition of books likely to disturb public order, and the summons of a general council backed by the civil power. The best way to still schism, he urged, was for everyone to lead a good life. Harking back to his contention with Luther, he pleaded that such thorny questions as that of free will should be left to academic discussion. In reference to recent and violent iconoclastic outbreaks, while deprecating idolatry he set forth the view that images should be allowed as "silent poetry."

This harmless essay evoked an immediate storm of wrath from the Reformers and the eventual condemnation of the Catholics.[4] Luther's attack took the form

[1] Best printed in the *Zeitschrift des Bergischen Geschichtsvereins*, xxx (1894), p. 207. Also in LB. col. 1755.

[2] Erasmus to Tomicki, September 2, 1532. Miaskowski, *Erasmiana*, no. 27, p. 320.

[3] LB. v, 470 ff. Preface also Lond. xxix, 37, July 31, 1533.

[4] E. Gossart: *Un livre d'Érasme reprouvé par l'Université de Louvain. (Liber de sarcienda ecclesiæ concordia*, 1558). 1902.

of an open letter to Amsdorf[1] and a preface to a lengthy refutation by Corvinus.[2] In the former he reviewed Erasmus's *Catechism*, his *Method of Theology*, his *Paraphrases*, and other works, and asserted that all of them suggest doubts to the reader, as "Why is Christ not called God but Lord in the Bible?" and, "Why is the Spirit not called God but Holy (or saint, *sanctus*)", thus proving that the writer of such words is an Arian and a skeptic. The preface to Corvinus's pamphlet remarked on the too great gentleness of this author, and showed that, while agreement of faith is one thing and charity another, Erasmus wanted the former, though Luther could consent only to the latter. Debate and mutual concession were vain when two sides were so fundamentally opposed as light and darkness, Christ and Belial.

More attention was paid by the public to the *Letter to Amsdorf* than to the work of Corvinus; Luther knew that this letter had displeased Philip Melanchthon,[3] but that it was applauded by others.[4] One of the humanist's friends answered it,[5] and another was convinced by it that Luther had softening of the brain.[6] In partial mitigation of judgment on the writer's virulence it must be remembered that he was urged on by flatterers, from whom he received false reports of his enemy. One of the guests at his table spoke as follows of the great scholar:[7]

> I knew him [at Basle 1521-22] and of all pestilent men none was worse than he. A certain priest told me that he believed neither in God nor immortality, and that once he had burst forth in this blasphemy, that if God did not exist he would like to rule the world with his own wisdom.

[1] Enders, x, 8 ff, circa March 11, 1534. *Cf.* Enders ix, 382, showing that Amsdorf had suggested the subject to him.

[2] Preface to Corvinus, *Quatenus expediat aeditam recens Erasmi rationes sequi* 1534. *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, xxxviii, 273.

[3] *Tischreden*, Weimar, iv, no. 4899.

[4] Corvinus to Luther, Enders, x, 85.

[5] Egranus's answer is known only by an allusion of Luther, Enders, x, 36.

[6] Boniface Amerbach, who sent this letter to his brother and to Erasmus. Burckhardt-Biedermann: *Bon. Amerbach und die Reformation*, p. 297.

[7] *Tischreden*, Weimar, iv, no. 4899. The speaker was one Wolfgang Schiefer, afterwards tutor to Prince Maximilian II.

Shocked by the letter, which he described as "simply furious, and so wickedly mendacious that it might displease even the stanchest Lutherans, especially as it threatens even worse things to come,"[1] Erasmus at first reflected that it was impossible to answer a madman, as Luther now plainly showed himself to be.[2] To Agricola he wrote[3] that if the Reformer, angered by the *Catechism* he had recently written for the king of England's new father-in-law, did throw his books out of the schools and deliver his person to Satan, the man thus slighted thought none the worse of himself for all that. Loaded with favors by emperors and kings, he could well dispense with the good graces of the Wittenberg professor. On second thoughts, however, he published a pamphlet[4] defending himself against accusations of paganism and blaming the violent language which he said was equally distasteful to him by whichever side it was used. This apology was in turn rebutted by Amsdorf, but the humanist's life did not last long enough to continue the controversy further.

A good many people were repelled by Luther's savage treatment of the old scholar. Leo Jud, the Swiss Reformer, in a letter to Bucer, blamed the Wittenberger for this;[5] and a general reference in an epistle of Julius Pflug to "those who deny that eloquence can be united with knowledge" seems to point to the Reformer.[6]

With regrettable inconsistency, however, the Reformer himself continued to spice his works with transparent sneers at "Italo-German vipers, asps, and viper-asps"—

[1] To De Pins, November 13, 1534; Nîmes Manuscript published in appendix to this book.

[2] To Decius, Miaskowski, ep. 36; *cf.* letter to Melanchthon, October 6, 1534, LB. ep. 1273.

[3] Edited by Buchwald in *Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben*, v. 1884, p. 56.

[4] *Adversus calumniosissimam epistolam Martini Lutheri*, LB., x, 1537 ff.

[5] Letter dated April 27, 1534, published by Grisar in *Historisches Jahrbuch*, xxxix, 1919, p. 512.

[6] Letter of J. Pflug, probably to Erasmus, May 5, 1533, published in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, xvii, 1920, p. 231.

i.e. Hyperaspistes.[1] His table talk is full of the most rancorous expressions; a few specimens will suffice to show their character:[2]

Erasmus wishes to leave behind him the faith he dares not confess during his lifetime. Such men, who will not say what they think, are paltry fellows; they measure everything by their own wisdom and think that if God existed he would make another and a better world.

All who pray, curse. Thus when I say, "Hallowed be thy name," I curse Erasmus and all who think contrary to the Word.

He arrogates to himself the divinity he would like to take from Christ, whom, in his *Colloquies* he compares to Priapus,[3] and whom he mocks in his *Colloquies* and especially in his detestable *Miscellany.*[4]

He thinks the Christian religion either a comedy or a tragedy, and that the things described in the New Testament never happened, but were invented as an apologue.

Erasmus is worthy of great hatred. I warn you all to regard him as God's enemy. He inflames the baser passions of young boys and regards Christ as I regard Klaus Narr [the court fool].

When Erasmus died Luther expressed the opinion that he did so "without light and without the cross."[5]

Even while the battle was raging most fiercely with Luther, Erasmus kept on the best of terms with Melanchthon, whose "fatal charm" he acknowledged and whom he hoped to retain in the bosom of the Church. Because this Hamlet of the Reformation designated it as his misfortune to have been thrown, as Luther's lieutenant, into the religious controversy, the Catholics cherished constant hope of winning him back to their side by holding out to him offers of a quiet and honorable position

[1] Preface to Bugenhagen's ed. of *Athanasius contra Idolatriam*, 1532, *Luthers Werke*, Weimar, xxx, part iii, p. 531.

[2] *Conversations with Luther*, translated and edited by P. Smith and H. P. Gallinger, 1915, pp. 105-114.

[3] In the *Colloquia, Convivium Religiosum*, some one says that he has put Christ as guardian of his garden instead of Priapus. LB. i, 673E.

[4] *I.e.* the *Farrago nova epistolarum*, 1519.

[5] "Sine lux et sine crux"; Luther's *Tischreden*, Weimar, v, no. 5670, anno 1544. The phrase, "Sine lux, sine crux, sine Deus," was first applied to Erasmus by the Dominicans of Louvain. Allen, ep. 950.

in which to pursue his dear studies.[1] The first serious attempt to detach the gentle scholar from stormy Wittenberg came in 1525 when the legate Campeggio sent a prominent Catholic scholar, Nausea, to confer with Erasmus at Basle on this plan. When he had published his *Diatribe* the year before, the author had felt constrained to write to Melanchthon what amounted to an apology for breaking the peace.[2] Long, he protested, had he refrained from attacking the leader of the Evangelical cause because he favored renovating the Church, and because he had hoped that Luther would modify his acerbity. Only under the intolerable provocation given him by Hutten, in the fear of tumults, and in resentment at the hauteur of other reformers, particularly Zwingli, did he consent to oppose the Saxon friar.

To this advance he received a courteous reply, entirely agreeing with his strictures on those who, forgetting humanity and religion, had arrogated to themselves the name evangelical.[3] The writer was sure, as he communicated to other friends, that when Luther answered the *Diatribe* it would be with moderation.[4]

Erasmus's rather tart reply to this, reminding one of his words to Pirckheimer that he dared not be civil to the Lutherans because of the "sycophants," advanced the position that no one hurt Luther as much as did his followers, just as no one hurt the pope as much as did *his* partisans, and that the extravagances of a man corrupted by applause proved that the cure for the Church was worse than the disease, for it is useless, even were it true, to instil into the ears of the people the idea that the pope is antichrist and that there is no free will.[5]

When *The Bondage of the Will* came out, it was no

[1] On this G. Kawerau: *Die Versuche Melanchthon zur katholischen Kirche zurückzuführen*, 1902.

[2] September 6, 1524, Lond. xix, 113; LB. ep. 703; L. C. ep. 633.

[3] September 30, 1524, Lond. xix, 2; LB. ep. 704; L. C. ep. 637.

[4] Botzheim to Erasmus, November 26, 1524. Enthoven, ep. 29.

[5] December 10, 1524; Lond. xix, 3; LB. ep. 714.

secret that Melanchthon regretted the tone of his friend.[1] He saw in the humanist's expressed suspicion that the work was composed by the joint efforts of "the church of Wittenberg" a reflection on himself, and hastened to meet it by sending word through a common friend that he not only had no hand in the book, but that he took no pleasure in Luther's bitterly controversial manners.[2] On the other hand he found the *Hyperaspistes* prolix, confused, bitter, and unfair, though he was half convinced by it that determinism would be bad for the common man.[3]

The pair, so much alike in many ways, continued on the friendliest terms, the veneration of the younger man and the policy of the elder to use him as a brake on the Reformation coach, supplying the motives of occasional intercourse. To the continued wishes expressed by the humanist that the Reformers would try to promote morals as vigorously as they endeavored to establish their own opinions, and to frequent lamentations about the tumults of the times and the perils into which the cause of learning had fallen,[4] Melanchthon responded so heartily that his adviser hardly knew what his position in regard to the Reform really was.[5]

In 1532 Melanchthon dedicated his *Commentary on*

[1] Capito to Zwingli, September 26, 1526: *Zwinglis Werke*, viii, 725. "Philippus fertur non dissimulare quod Lutheri acrimoniam in Erasmum utpote virum optime meritum de bonis literis, parum probat."

[2] Melanchthon to Sigismund Gelenius, middle of July, 1526. The text in the *Corpus Reformatorum*, no. 393, has been altered by the editors to conceal the reflection on Luther. The true text, given by Druffel: "Melanchthon Handschiften in der Chigi Bibliothek," *Akademie der Wissenschaften, München, Sitzungsberichte, Phil.—Hist. Classe*, 1876, p. 501, reads: "Erasmum, quæso, ut mihi places, nam quod suspicatur Lutherum mea uti opera, valde errat; ego enim sua acerba conflictatione minime delector." A letter of W. Rychard to J. Magenbuch, dated Ulm, September 3, "anno a manifestato Heliæ spiritu quarto" (1524?) speaks of Erasmus's suspicion that Melanchthon was attacking him. J. G. Schelhorn: *Amoenitates literariæ*, 1725, ii, 306.

[3] To Luther, October 2, 1527; Enders vi, 97; L. C. ep. 775. To Camerarius, April 11, 1526, *Corpus Reformatorum*, i, 794. L. C. ep. 730.

[4] Erasmus to Melanchthon, February 5, 1528; *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, xxxi, 88, 1910.

[5] Erasmus to Camerarius, August 9, 1529; Lond. xxiv, LB. ep. 1071.

Romans to Archbishop Albert of Mainz, begging that corrupt and Machiavellian, if somewhat vacillating, pillar of the Catholic Church to provide a mild remedy for the abuses of the times. On October 25th he sent a copy of the lucubration to Erasmus, expressing by an accompanying letter his regret for the violence of both sides, neither of whom, he remarks, "will listen to *our* counsel."[1] No wonder that the old scholar gathered that the writer was by this time "disgusted with his own party";[2] though when he came to examine the *Commentary* closely he found that he disapproved more than he liked in it,[3] and a little later he observed that, though Melanchthon might write more mildly than Luther, he did not, in fact, differ a straw from his dogma, but was "almost more Lutheran than Luther himself."[4]

Another lover's quarrel broke out when the sensitive old man saw in an invective against insinuating scepticism, inserted into a new edition of Melanchthon's *Commonplaces* of 1535, an innuendo against himself. To his inquiries the author replied with a flattering but truthful expression of his profound respect, and a disclaimer that he should ever attack one from whom he had learned so much.[5] In some lost letter of these later years he did, however, venture to suggest that the humanist might make acts square with his words, doing more for a cause for which he had said so much. To this he received an epigrammatic response in a line of Greek poetry:[6] ἔργα νέων, βουλάι δὲ μέσων, εὐχαί τε γερόντων (Young men for action, middle-aged for counsel, old men for prayer.)

Doubtless chafing under the yoke of "the almost dis-

[1] *Corpus Reformatorum*, ii, 617 ff, with wrong date. On all this, G. Kawerau: *Die Versuche Melanchthon zur katholischen Kirche zurückzuführen*, 1902, pp. 16 ff.

[2] "Se suorum pigere."

[3] Erasmus to Amerbach, Corpus Christi (June 12), 1533. *Epistolæ ad Amerbachium*, no. 79.

[4] March 5, 1534. Wierzbowski: *Materialy do dziejów Piśmennictwa Pokkiego*, i, 1900, p. 74.

[5] May 12, 1536. *Corpus Reformatorum*, iii, 68 ff.

[6] *Melanchthoniana Pædogogica*, ed. K. Hartfelder, 1892, p. 176.

graceful servitude" which he said Luther imposed on his disciples, and feeling the attraction of the gentle scholar of Rotterdam, Melanchthon was planning to visit him, when he was prevented by the old man's death. In the anguish of the lost opportunity he expressed himself so pointedly that murmurs arose among the orthodox of Wittenberg against those who would rather read the dead Erasmus than hear the living Luther.[1]

[1] Cordatus's complaint of September 8, 1536. *Corpus Reformatorum*, iii, 159. On Melanchthon's planned visit see C. Gerlach to J. Westphal, July 29, 1536, K. und W. Krafft: *Briefe und Dokumente*, 1875, p. 77.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SWISS REFORMATION

CONTEMPORARY with the great Lutheran movement, largely dependent on it but in part owing inspiration to different sources, there evolved in Switzerland a revolt from Rome through various imperfect stages to a consummation in Calvinism. But though the genius of Geneva finally stamped on the Reformed Church its indelible character, equipped and organized it for the conquest of much of Europe and North America, this movement took, in its earliest stages, and from its first captain, a free-born son of William Tell, a spirit of liberalism and rationalism later transformed into Republicanism and logical philosophy. If Ulrich Zwingli lacked the mighty genius of Luther, the piercing vision and marvelous gift of language apt to arouse a people to enthusiasm, he was superior to his rival in a certain political aptitude and in a somewhat greater freedom of intellect. Like a more Christian Ulrich von Hutten, or as the Arnold von Winkelried of sacred learning, he led a free people to a freer religion.

That this child of the mountains and the forests, born in liberty and educated in the humanism of Basle and Vienna, should have found his first, and, until Luther appeared, his strongest, inspiration in the writings of Erasmus, omened well for the intellectual and moral quality of his reform. Imbibing with relish the "philosophy of Christ," tinctured with the ethical, perhaps Stoical Christianity of its expounder, he learned, at the age of thirty, from Erasmus's *Expostulation of Jesus with Man* that Christ was the only mediator, and that the hierarchy of angels and the rites of the Church could be

subordinated, or disregarded.[1] "I do not remember," he confessed, on reading the *Plan or Compendium of True Theology*, "to have found elsewhere so much fruit in so small a space." With enthusiasm he bought, studied, and in part copied the Greek New Testament at its first appearance. In its editor he found the great emancipator, the Christian opponent of the schoolmen and the equal of the worldly humanists. Later he came even more completely under the spell of Luther, and perhaps his originality consisted more in a genius capable of combining two such almost incompatible elements as were the minds of these two men than in anything else. The older scholar himself recognized his own thoughts in the commentaries of the younger disciple: "O good Zwingli," he exclaimed on one occasion, "what do you write that I have not written before?"[2]

As parish priest at Glarus Zwingli made a trip to Basle early in 1516 especially to see his idol, soon afterwards writing him a fervent letter of thanks and appreciation for all that the great scholar had done for him.[3] Presently he received the following kind answer:[4]

> Your affection for me, as well as the festive and learned eloquence of your letter greatly delighted me. If I answer very briefly, impute the fault not to me, but to my endless labors, which often make me less kind to those to whom I should least wish to be unkind, but make me especially unkind to myself, drawing off the force of my intellect more than the fifth essence could restore. I am very glad that my works are approved by a man so generally approved as you; and for this reason, they displease me less. I congratulate Switzerland, of which I am very fond, that you and men like you polish and ennoble her with learning and character, especially Glarean, a man singularly respected by me on account of his various learning and uprightness,

[1] *Zwinglis Werke*, hg. von Egli, Finsler, & Köhler, 1990⁵ ff, ii, 217. The *Expostulatio Jesu cum homine*, first published in 1514, is in LB. v, 1319. On the relations of Zwingli and Erasmus see S. M. Jackson: *Ulrich Zwingli*, 1900, p. 86; J. M. Usteri: *Zwingli und Erasmus*, 1885; W. Köhler: "Zwingli als Theologe," in *Ulrich Zwingli: Zum Gedächtnis der Zürcher Reformation* 1519-1919, cols. 23 ff.

[2] Zwingli to Vadian, May 28, 1525. Z. W. viii, pp. 333 f.

[3] Allen, ep. 401; *cf.* corrections iii, p. xxv; Z. W. vii, ep. 13.

[4] May 8, 1516. Allen, ep. 404. Z. W. ep. 14.

and one wholly devoted to you. . . . Exercise your pen, Ulrich, that best teacher of style: I see that natural talent is there if only practice is added. I have written this at the request of Glarean, a man to whom I can deny nothing, even should he ask me to dance naked. Farewell.

Henry Loriti of Glarus, thence commonly called Glarean, a warm friend of both parties, in his efforts to bring them together again, wrote Zwingli a little later to ask if he had received this epistle, which apparently lay unanswered.[1]

After accepting a call to Zurich in 1519, Zwingli, by his vigorous reformation of that city, made it the capital of the Swiss revolt from Rome. Hoping to win the older man to his side, and in strait alliance with Hutten, he made another visit to Basle in March, 1522,[2] probably inviting Erasmus to Zurich, but receiving only a polite refusal coupled with the advice to be careful, which he apparently did not resent.[3] After this, correspondence was renewed vigorously for a time, and has luckily been preserved by Zwingli, for Erasmus never published it, fearing to compromise his neutrality.

In these early years Erasmus was popularly regarded, in Switzerland as elsewhere, as an ally of Luther. One pamphlet, published at Zurich in 1521, claiming to be by two Swiss peasants, and possibly written by Utz Eckstein, is entitled, "A Description of God's Mill, and of the divine Meal sent by God's grace and ground by the most famous of all millers, Erasmus of Rotterdam, and baked by the true baker Martin Luther and protected by the strong Peasant."[4] Another citizen of Zurich, Hans Füssli the bell-founder, rejoiced, in a poem

[1] Z. W., vii, ep. 17.

[2] His intention of making the visit is spoken of as early as June 19, 1520, Z. W. vii, p. 329; also in Jan., 1522, *Vadianische Briefsammlung*, ii, 415. On the visit *cf.* Z. W. vii, 440; 499.

[3] August 1, 1530. Lond. xxxi, 59.

[4] *Dyss hand zwen schwytzer puren gmacht. Furwar sy hand es wol betracht, Beschribung der götlichen müly, &c.* Copy of the first edition at Cornell; reprinted by O. Schade: *Satiren und Pasquille*, 1859, i, 119.

published in May, 1521, that the gospel would now be preached "by the splendid, famous, learned man, Erasmus of Rotterdam, who opened up the right way on which we may safely go to the true Holy Scripture, which surpasses all things."[1] In like tone a peasant of Thurgau asked, "Where have you seen that anyone brings forward Paul as fairly as Erasmus has done?"[2]

But the great scholar, as soon as he came to Basle to live, assumed that rôle of neutrality which seemed concerned mainly to prevent violence on either side. He disliked the association of Zwingli and Hutten, from which he inferred no gentle methods of reform. After seeing an anonymous pamphlet, generally known to be by Zwingli, in which the author animadverts severely on the proposition made by Pope Adrian at Nuremberg to quell the schism, Erasmus wrote,[3] December 9, 1522:

> It is kind of you to take my affection for you so well. But I warn many in vain. I could easily bear the rashness of others did it not compromise good learning and good men and the Evangelical cause, which they promote so stupidly that if anyone wished Christianity extinct he could not devise a better method of bringing this about than theirs. Another worthless trifle has been published on the pope. If the writer had added his name he would have been insane; as it is he has produced an anonymous, but dangerous and bungling, article. If all Lutherans are such they will bid me good-by. I never saw anything more inept than their folly. If winter did not keep me here I should go elsewhere to avoid hearing it.

Zwingli apparently did not take this warning kindly. Erasmus told Melanchthon[4] that Zwingli had informed him that there could be no agreement between them, and had answered his admonition as proudly as if he were St. Paul in the third heaven. The Zurich priest

[1] Schade, i, 22.

[2] Schade, i, 161 ff.

[3] Z. W., vii, 631 f. The work was: *Suggestio deliberandi super propositione Hadriani Nerobergae facta*, Werke, i, 429 ff. Other warning, vii, 582, on the Apologeticus of Zwingli. September.

[4] September 6, 1524. Lond. xix, 113. LB. ep. 703.

himself looked back on the breach with some bitterness, remarking that though it was caused by his defense of Luther, he had only lost the Dutchman without winning the Saxon.[1]

As the Reformation drew nearer home Erasmus naturally felt its impact more strongly. The innovators at Basle announced their break with the ancient episcopal government on Palm Sunday, April 13, 1522, at a banquet served with a sucking pig and embellished with oratory, much like the old-fashioned barbecues for political purposes in the United States.[2] Though Erasmus and his friends took and discreetly expressed offense at this method of purifying the Church, they were forced to see a great addition to the strength of the Reformers when, toward the end of the same year, Œcolampadius accepted a call to Basle and began, early in 1523, to teach at the university. He had already spent three years (1515-18) in the town helping with the publication of the Greek Testament, and his ancient friendship with the editor presaged a peaceful and moderate course. At one time, indeed, Œcolampadius had turned away from the new gospel, and had sought rest for his soul in a Bridgettine cloister; he came out of it, after two years, aged more with study and inward struggle than with his forty years.[3]

While the humanist and this Reformer lived in mutual respect and kindness, a very different aspect of the movement presented itself with the arrival, in 1524, of William Farel, a man on fire with zeal from the crown of his red

[1] Zwingli to Blaurer, May 4, 1528. *Briefwechsel der Blaurer*, i, 148; Z. W. ix, ep. 720.

[2] B. Fleischlin: *Schweizerische Reformationsgeschichte*, ii, 1908, p. 337. N. Weiss: "G. Farel &c.," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français*, lxix, 1920, 115 ff.

[3] On him see *Realencyklopädie*, *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, *Ulrich Zwingli zum Gedächtnis*, p. 291; E. Stähelin: *Œcolampadius' Beziehungen zur Reformation*, 1917; *Id.: Œcolampad-Bibliographie*, 1918. A. Bigelmair, in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Renaissance und Reformation J. Schlecht dargebracht*, 1917, pp. 15 ff. Œcolampadius entered the cloister at Altomünster on April 23, 1520, and left it January 23, 1522.

head to the sole of his gospeller's feet upon the mountains. After a public oration in Latin, on February 28th, which was translated on the spot into German by Œcolampadius for the benefit of the audience,[1] Farel took it upon himself to visit Erasmus, whom he had just called "a chameleon and a pernicious enemy of the gospel," and to give a little instruction in divinity. The discussion over the invocation of the Holy Spirit, with special reference to the *comma Johanneum* or spurious verse, I John v: 7, waxed so hot that the French youth told his elder that Froben's wife knew more theology than did he, and that he would rather go to the stake than not attack the humanist's fame. He contrasted the simple faith of Œcolampadius with the gaudy pretension to esoteric learning displayed by his antagonist, and, in short, acted in such a way that the other believed even Luther would have disapproved of him. How easily, remarked Erasmus, he himself might have won golden opinions of his erudition by calling the pope antichrist! He revenged himself by fixing the name Phallicus on his assailant, and by having him, in July, expelled or requested to leave.[2]

Such incidents could not fail to turn Erasmus more than ever against the Reformation. The continued tumults, as he wrote Eoban Hess,[3] seemed likely to discredit not only the Pseudo-Lutherans, but the Reformer himself and all good learning. At the same time he uttered the following terribly severe arraignment of the fruits of the Reformation:

> How strong a man is Luther, I know not; but certainly this new gospel has produced a new race of men: stern, impudent, wily,

[1] B. Fleischlin, pp. 364 ff. Weiss, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

[2] Erasmus to Anthony Brugnarius, October 27, 1524. Lond. xviii, 40; LB. ep. 707. Calvin to Farel, February 3, 1551, and Farel to Calvin, February 14, 1551, in *Calvini Opera* ed. Baum, Cunitz & Reuss, xiv, 42. Hilaire Bertolph to Farel, Basle, end of April, 1524, Herminjard: *Correspondance des Réformateurs des pays de la langue française,*[2] 1878, i, 211. Peter Toussain to Farel, September 2, 1524, *ibid*, p. 284 ff.

[3] September 6, 1524. Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, ii, ep. 7.

cursing, liars and sycophants; discordant among themselves, obliging to none, disobliging to all, seditious, furious, brawlers, who displease me so much that if I knew a city free from this sort I would migrate thither.[1]

Elsewhere he expressed the now famous opinion that where Lutheranism reigned learning perished, even though the Protestant sect had been particularly nourished by learning.[2] In this phrase we see struggling to expression the truth that the Reformation, though in large part prepared and made possible by the Renaissance, afterward turned against it, dissociating itself with cruel violence from the freer thought. The incompatibility of the two spirits is well set forth in another letter:[3]

I see how hard it is for the devotees of polite literature to agree with theologians, and again how the theologians are scarcely just to liberal studies. The long-standing quarrels of princes are sometimes at length composed by a marriage; would that some nymph might arise to unite you in mutual benevolence, by which the studies of both would flourish more.

The main point which divided the Reformers among themselves was the doctrine of the eucharist. The theory of the Catholic Church, transubstantiation, is that the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and blood of the Lord, though the accidents of taste, form, etc., remain the same. Luther's theory, sometimes called consubstantiation, was nearly allied, namely, that the body and blood were actually present with the bread and wine, though without any direct transmutation, just as, to use a favorite simile, fire is actually present in red-hot iron. While Luther was absent at the Wartburg, in 1521, a new and more advanced opinion arose almost simultaneously in several quarters, that the Lord's Supper was a commemorative

[1] To Henry Stromer, 1524. LB. ep. 715.

[2] To Pirckheimer, dated 1528, probably written *circa* February 21, 1529. Lond. xix, 50; LB. ep. 1006. On date, L. C., no. 821, note.

[3] To Sylvius (*circa* August, 1525), Lond. xix, 88.

rite merely, and that the elements were but the tokens of the body and blood, and in no sense identical with them. This opinion was defended by a Dutch theologian, Honius, by Andrew Bodenstein von Carlstadt, one of Luther's colleagues, and by the so-called Zwickau prophets.[1] When Luther returned to Wittenberg, March, 1522, he so discredited the prophets and eventually Carlstadt that they were obliged to withdraw, first from Wittenberg and then from Saxony. Carlstadt produced a number of pamphlets attacking Luther on several grounds, among them the doctrine of the eucharist.[2] His work favorably impressed the leaders of the Swiss reform movement, men far abler than he was, Ulrich Zwingli and Œcolampadius. Erasmus wrote, on October 2, 1525, to Michael Buda, Bishop of Langres:[3]

> A new dogma has arisen, that the eucharist is nothing but bread and wine. Not only is it naturally difficult to refute, but Œcolampadius has supported it with such copious arguments and reasons that it seems that even the elect may be seduced!

The truth is that Erasmus had been asked by the Town Council of Basle to give his opinion on Œcolampadius's tract entitled "Of the true Understanding of the Words of the Lord, 'This is my Body,'" and had given it to the effect that the work was learned, eloquent, and thorough, and might even have been called pious could anything be pious which differed from the consensus of the Church's opinion, from which to dissent was always dangerous.[4] His position, however, was so ambiguous[5] that each side saw in him a supporter of the other. On the one hand Melanchthon discovered in him the original

[1] This opinion also held by the Bohemian Brethren, as one of them had written Erasmus on October 10, 1519. Allen, ep. 1021.

[2] Preserved Smith: *A Short History of Christian Theophagy*, 1922, pp. 122 ff.

[3] Lond. xx, 60. LB. 766.

[4] *Bassler Chronick . . . durch Christian Wurstisen* (1580), ed. of 1883, book iv, chap. 14, p. 385. Fleischlin: *Schweizerische Reformationsgeschichte*, 1908, ii, 410.

[5] *Cf.* his letter to Lupset, Lond. xviii, 11; LB. ep. 790. Internal evidence dates it December 1525.

source from which the Swiss had drawn their doctrine;[1] on the other, many begged him to defend the doctrine of the real presence.[2] Privately he expressed his doubts very freely. Thus to Pirckheimer he wrote:[3]

> Œcolampadius's opinion of the eucharist would not displease me were it not opposed to the consensus of the Church. For I do not see what is the function of a body which cannot be apprehended by the senses, nor what use it would be to have it apprehended by the senses, provided that the spiritual grace were present in the symbols. But the authority of the Church binds me.

And again,[4]

> I should have some doubts, as one little learned, on the eucharist, did not the authority of the Church; by which I mean the consent of Christians throughout the world, move me.

No wonder that the sacramentarians, as they were now called, believed that the great scholar was either in agreement with them or on the point of becoming converted. In fact, several of them openly claimed him as their own, the most forward to do so being Leo Jud, a friend of Zwingli, who under a pseudonym published a German pamphlet entitled *The Opinion of the Learned Erasmus of Rotterdam and of Dr. Martin Luther on the Lord's Supper*.[5] The ingenious author tries to prove by quotations from Erasmus's works that the humanist regarded the bread and wine only as symbols; and then

[1] Melanchthon to Aquila, October 12, 1529. *Corpus Reformatorum*, iv, 970. S. M. Jackson: *Zwingli*, p. 85, note.

[2] Toussain to Farel, September 18, 1525. Herminjard, i, 385. M. Hummelberg wrote Beatus Rhenanus on November 2, 1525, that he was glad to hear that Erasmus was going to write on the eucharist. *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, p. 341. Erasmus's warnings to Zwingli and Zwingli's comment in Z. W. ix, 431.

[3] June 6, 1526; Lond. xxx, 44; LB. ep. 823. See my *Christian Theophagy*, 148 ff.

[4] To Pirckheimer, July 30, 1526; Lond. xxx, 43; LB. ep. 827.

[5] *Des Hochgelerten Erasmi von Roterdam und Doctor Martin Luthers maynung vom Nachtmal. . . .* 1526. [Colophon:] April 18, 1526. *Lodovicus Leopoldi Pfarrer zu Leberaw.* I use the copy in the Bodleian Library, Tract. Luth. 46, no. 18. On the authorship *cf. Bibliotheca Erasmiana*, iii, 32, and *Vadianische Briefwechsel*, vi, 1906, p. 265.

deduces the same opinion logically from Luther's belief that there is no difference between priests, who consecrate the bread and wine, and laymen. In both cases probably the Zwinglian view of the sacrament would have been the logical corollary of certain admitted premises, but in fact one cannot deduce any man's opinions thus syllogistically. Consequences perfectly evident to one man are often denied by another, and so, while Luther was unshaken by the clever work of Jud, Erasmus was moved only to indignation. Defending himself, he wrote to the synod then assembled at Baden that this tract showed both ignorance and malice, and that the publication of such pamphlets, once regarded as a capital crime, had of late become the regular sport of men claiming to preach the gospel.[1] In like tenor he published an open letter to all lovers of the truth, showing that the deep difference between himself and the Reformers was best testified by their attacks on him.[2]

But they were not all so easily convinced. Since 1519 there had been at Basle an Alsatian Reformer, an excellent Hebrew scholar and a personal friend of Erasmus, Conrad Pellican[3] by name. Though he inherited from peasant ancestors a homely face and a particularly firm-set mouth, his friend knew him to be "a very childlike, kindly, sweet-spirited man." Acting on the maxim, unfortunately not universally true in this hard world of strife, that peacemakers are blessed, he tried to persuade the great scholar that their opinions on the Lord's Supper were fundamentally in agreement. The latter assured him,[4] however, that he was mistaken and that the writer, having been persuaded by the Church

[1] Lond. xix, 45. LB. 818.

[2] Lond. xxx, 58. *Cf. Praestigiarum libelli cujusdam*, June, 1526, LB. x, 1557.

[3] See his picture in *Ulrich Zwingli: Zum Gedächtnis*, 1919, pp. 113 f. On the man see *Das Chronikon von K. Pellikan*, hg. von Riggenbach, 1877, and L. C., ii, p. 317. The correspondence of Pellican and Erasmus on this subject is recalled by John Laski in a letter to Pellican, dated Emden, August 31, 1544. *Scrinium antiquarium sive Miscellanea Groningana* [ed. Daniel Gerdes], 1750, tomus, ii, pars I, pp. 530 f.

[4] Lond. xix, 95, 96; LB. epp. 845-847, all dated 1526.

to accept the gospel, would always learn from the same mistress the true interpretation of the words of the Gospel. To the statement that Zwingli might write against him the humanist boldly replied that in a matter he really cared about he feared not ten Zwinglis. On the other hand, rather than drench the world with blood for the sake of a few ambiguous articles he would dissemble his belief or disbelief in ten such points.

The expected intervention of Zwingli was not in vain. About this time he published a pseudonymous satire, *The Epistle of a Certain Frank to a Certain Citizen of Basle*, containing a bitter criticism of Erasmus's position, both for his reply to Pellican and for saying that Christ was really present in the eucharist "in an ineffable manner." This pamphlet was forbidden at Basle.[1] Erasmus's natural anger at this attack aroused the further resentment of the sacramentarians, who now regarded him as "the brother of the Wittenbergers" in his eucharistic doctrine, and as having lost all savor of piety.[2]

Though occasionally requested by the orthodox to write something on the moot dogma,[3] Erasmus had the prudence not to do so. At one time, indeed, he thought of answering Œcolampadius, but abandoned the plan[4] because he feared that it would only excite tumult without producing edification, and because Bishop Fisher and the Sorbonne had taken the task upon themselves. In fact, the desperate earnestness of the Reformers of Wittenberg and of Zurich, each of whom would rather have died than yield a single point, was

[1] Fleischlin, ii, 410. The date here given, October 23, 1525, seems too early. By "Francus" does Zwingli mean "Frenchman," "Franconian," or simple "Freeman"? If the former he may have wished to suggest the suspicion that the letter was by Farel, for he was not above such disingenuous strategy.

[2] Capito to Zwingli, September 26, 1526. Z. W., viii, p. 725.

[3] Botzheim to Erasmus, February 2, 1527. Förstemann-Günther, p. 64. G. Thomas to Erasmus, August 31, 1527. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

[4] October 19, 1527, to Pirckheimer. LB. ep. 905. *Pirckheimeri Opera* ed. Goldast, p. 286.

highly disgusting to the man of charity, and in his eyes did nothing but discredit the cause they represented.[1]

With another type of Reformer Erasmus came in contact in the year 1522, when Balthasar Hübmaier came to Basle to confer with him on purgatory and on the dark places in John's Apocalypse, but went away disappointed with the man "who spoke freely but wrote cautiously."[2] Hübmaier is commonly classed as an Anabaptist, the leader of the left wing of Protestantism, the dissidence of dissent. Though he himself was a university man, most of the Anabaptists were uneducated and sprang from the lower classes of society, particularly after the poor had been so cruelly rebuffed in the Peasants' War by the leader of the Lutheran established church. Erasmus noted the progress of the sectarians and truly observed that though they won large numbers of adherents they never founded a church[3] of their own. With equal discernment and fairness he remarked on the purity of their lives, on their constancy under perpetual martyrdom,[4] and on their aim to establish a new democracy verging on anarchy. When seditious he thought they should not be tolerated.[5]

Personal influences combined with others of a more general nature to make Erasmus tired of his surroundings. Of the quarrels thrust upon him one of the most disagreeable was that with a young Saxon knight whom he learned to know pleasantly at Louvain in 1520. Henry von Eppendorf, as the youth was called, then went to the University of Freiburg, whence he kept up a witty correspondence with the humanist. From Boniface Amerbach he requested and received the *Epistolæ ad diversos*, which he richly annotated.[6] His marginal comments reveal his warm admiration for

[1] To Bucer, November 11, 1527. Lond. xix, 72. LB. ep. 906.
[2] H. Vedder: *B. Hübmaier*, 1905, p. 54.
[3] To Fonseca, March 25, 1529, Lond. xxix, 33. LB. ep. 1033.
[4] To Tunstall, 1525. Lond. xxii, 23. LB. ep. 793.
[5] Lond. xxx, 77, uncertain date.
[6] Allen, iv, appendix xiv, pp. 615 ff.

Luther and Hutten and his gradually changing feeling toward the scholar whom he came to regard as a renegade. For him the Saxon Reformer was "thrice great," the Dominicans and Hochstraten, Eck, Faber, Prierias, Cajetan "and six hundred others" were scoundrels, and Erasmus was eloquent, but cowardly and devoted to the princes of this world.

When he heard, whether truly or not, that the humanist had been making disparaging remarks about him, he came to Basle in 1528, and let it be known that he was going to bring Erasmus to justice.[1] The scholar cared little for his threats, but was persuaded by his friends to allow Eppendorf an interview. Eppendorf appeared, and in the presence of Beatus Rhenanus and Louis Ber, presented a letter purporting to be from Erasmus to Duke George of Saxony, in which the writer advised the prince to recall Eppendorf from idleness, and at the same time made certain disparaging remarks about that young gentleman's family, and certain accusations of heresy. Erasmus refused to recognize the letter, which was in an unknown hand, unsigned and unsealed, as his. After a dispute, Eppendorf declared that he would consider the matter and communicate his decision to Beatus Rhenanus.

The demand, thus transmitted the next day, was that Erasmus should write to Duke George and justify Eppendorf, and that before sending the letter he should read it to the latter "lest by ambiguous and oblique terms I be more hurt than served." Furthermore, Erasmus was to give one hundred ducats to the poor of Freiburg, one hundred to the poor of Basle, and two hundred to Eppendorf to dispense among the poor of Strassburg. If Erasmus refused, Eppendorf would risk his life rather than his reputation. Moreover, as Erasmus had ruined Henry's reputation with other princes, he was

[1] Eppendorf to Zwingli, February 3, 1528. Z. W. viii, p. 355. "I am now here to force the great Erasmus to retract." The history of this quarrel is given in the main in the *Admonitio adversus mendacium* (1530) LB. x., 1683 ff, and in a letter to Pirckheimer, May 1, 1528, LB. No. 958. An excellent summary, which I follow, is given in *Bib. Eras. Admonitio . . .* 1 ff.

required to mend it again by the publication of a pamphlet dedicated to him.

Erasmus gave a qualified assent to the articles about the pamphlet and the letter, and said that he preferred to give Eppendorf two hundred ducats rather than have a law suit. Eppendorf made some difficulties about this, and the matter was left to the arbitration of Amerbach and Rhenanus, who rendered the award on February 3, 1528. Erasmus was to do as he had promised in the first two articles; Eppendorf was to suppress anything he had written against Erasmus; Erasmus was to give about twenty florins to the poor.

Eppendorf continued to make trouble. He demanded the letter and the dedication of the book at once. Erasmus drew up a draft of the dedication, but refused to publish it immediately, as it seemed to him ridiculous to print a dedication without a book. The letter to Duke George was also put off on the ground that no time was specified and that the conditions left Erasmus free to write either to the duke directly or to one of the court. We find him actually in February writing to both the duke and his officer, S. Pistorius, though not exactly in the sense which Eppendorf would have wished,[1] for he mentioned that the young gentleman was exciting the Lutherans against him.

Erasmus revenged himself characteristically by ridiculing his adversary's pretensions to noble birth, both in private letters[2] and in published works. A Colloquy, first printed in 1528, holds up to scorn a certain class of braggarts under the title "The Horseless Knight or Counterfeit Nobility."[3] So does the following passage[4] in the *Adages*, first inserted in September, 1528:

[1] To Pistorius, Februray 5, 1528; Horawitz: *Erasmiana* ii, no. 8. To Duke George (about February 18), 1528, *ibid*, i, no. 11.

[2] Erasmus to Egranus, no date (1528), *Handschriften aus der Reformationszeit*, hg. von O. Clemen, 1901, no. 18.

[3] Ἵππευς ἀνίππος *sive Ementita Nobilitas*, LB. i, 834. *Cf.* D. F. Strauss: *Ulrich von Hutten* (*Gesammelte Schriften*, 1877, Band vii), pp. 459, 512.

[4] No. 844, LB. ii, 350.

Among the nobles of Germany there are some imposters who bribe people to call them Junkers (Ionckheri), who boast their paternal castles, add a plume to their helmets, paint a coat of arms in which a hand holding a dagger stabs an elephant, and subscribe their letters "knight." If one named, for example, Ornithoplutus is born in the village of Isocomus, he doesn't call himself Isocomian, for that would be vulgar, but he dubbs himself Ornithoplutus von Isocomus.

The name selected is the Greek equivalent—though apparently the disguise thus far escaped detection—for Heinrich von Eppendorf.[1]

The peace was not, therefore, definitely established. In 1529 Erasmus wrote Eppendorf, who, he believed, had been accusing him publicly of perfidy, that he did not want his friendship, but would like him to keep his distance, for one could be hurt by worms and beetles. He wondered what he wanted. Eppendorf, then at Strassburg, replied very angrily indeed.[2]

On the whole, Erasmus had the best of the battle. On March 15, 1529, Duke George wrote him regretting the late unpleasantness and stating that he did not intend to recall Eppendorf.[3] In the following year Erasmus published his *Admonition against Falsehood and Slander*,[4] in which he recounted the whole affair, much to the disadvantage of his enemy. The latter replied with his version, February, 1531.[5]

But though unpleasant personal experiences doubtless had their weight with the old scholar, as they do with other men, yet his attitude was fundamentally far more changed by the increasing pace of religious revolution at Basle. Apparently in 1525, his opinion of certain reforms was solicited by the Town Council and given in a memorial not published in his works, but preserved in

[1] Ornithos equals Hein or Hahn, plutus means reich; Isos is Eben, and Comos is Dorf.

[2] These letters, the first without date, the second dated only 1529, LB. epp. 1087-1088.

[3] LB. App. ep. 349.

[4] LB. x, 1683 ff.

[5] *Bib. Er. Admonitio*, p. 11.

the archives of Basle.[1] In the guarded tone habitual to him, he begins by saying that he prefers to express no opinion of the Lutheran movement as a whole, but begs to refer them for a more learned evaluation of the same to his friend Lewis Ber, provost of St. Peter's Church and professor at the university. But on a few points of urgent local import, the humanist consented to give advice, though he knew that by not fully indorsing either side he would anger both, and though he was conscious of his difficulties as a stranger ignorant of German. In the first place, then, he thinks libellous and seditious books should be suppressed, as well as works on controversial points, at least if they are new. Much must be winked at in old books, or else even Jerome would not be printed, or any works save the canonical ones. The lucubrations of innovators, like Luther, might well be tolerated in so far as they argue temperately without vituperation. Ordinances of the Church, such as the use of images, the canon of the mass, chants, ceremonies, tonsure, and vestments, are said to be at best wholesome and at worst harmless. On account of the danger of changing old customs they should therefore be tolerated. Mass should be restored in its old form, though probably permission to communicate in both kinds might be obtained from the pope. Dispensations might also easily be obtained for not fasting, at least by those who needed to eat meat. Fugitive monks and nuns are said to be unworthy of favor, for it is incredible that a bad monk should make a good citizen. Cloisters, on the whole, are pronounced the best places of refuge for such people. Viewed in relation to the history of the time this document is notable, one of the most important in the history of liberty. Its quiet, diffident tone should not blind us to the fact that it actually proposed, for the first time,

[1] "Erasmi Rot. Consilium Senatui Basiliensi in negotio Lutherano," C. F. Ständlein: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Religion und Sittenlehre*, i, 1797, pp. 294-304. *Bassler Chronick durch C. Wurstisen*, ed. of 1883, book VII, chap. xiv, p. 385 f. *Cf.* B. Fleischlin: *Schweizerische Reformationsgeschichte*, 1908, ii, 384 ff.

a plan to allow for differences of religious practices, and freedom for arguing opposite opinions, within the same territory. Hitherto it had seemed axiomatic, and had been clearly stated by Luther, for example, that, if for no higher reasons, yet for the sake of peace and quietness one form of worship and belief only should be tolerated in one territory.

But the advice shattered at Basle on the rock of partisan fury, for the Protestant leaders continued to take counsel as to how to suppress Catholic worship, Œcolampadius early in 1527 publishing a pamphlet alleging the examples of old Jewish kings, and branding the mass as worse than theft, harlotry, treason, adultery, and murder. This was answered by Augustine Marius, or Mayr. The humanist's disgust with the whole proceeding is well expressed in a recently published letter to his friend Ber:[1]

> Your letter, no less learned than pious, relieved my mind of a large part of the disgust caused me less by my poor health and the wickedness of certain men than by the public misfortune of the world; for I see that the cause of Christianity is approaching a condition I should prefer not to have it reach. But the Lord, the Creator of men, wonderful in disposing and swiftly changing human affairs, causes me to retain some hope of a happier issue, provided only that we recognize that this calamity summons us to the philosophy of wisdom. Assuredly I have reaped some personal good from these great evils. There are certain men here who are trying to put this city into the same condition that Zurich is in; nor do they suffer your man[2] to be preacher, though he seems to me apt to teach and not at all seditious. His great crime is that he attracts large audiences.

Though the impression continued to gain ground that Erasmus was more Catholic than Protestant and could have stayed the progress of reform had he but thrown his weight fully on the side of the conservatives,[3] yet at Basle the religious revolution went its way. On October 22d of the same year four hundred Zwinglians met to

[1] January 26, 1527. Original first published, L. C., ii, p. 532 f; translation and notes, *ibid*, ep. 752.

[2] Probably Augustine Mayr.

[3] Letter of James Monasteriensis (of Münster, or of Montier-Grandval), to a friend at Mainz, dated Solothurn, January 29, 1528. *Quellenbuch zur Schweizergeschichte*, hg. von W. Oechsli, 1910, p. 317.

urge the Town Council to abolish Catholic services, but five days later the Council announced to all the gilds that everyone should be free to exercise which cult he pleased. The discontent of the Protestants found vent in an iconoclastic demonstration on Good Friday, April 15, 1528, during which the pictures were removed first from Œcolampadius's church and later elsewhere.[1] This was done, however, without the knowledge of the Reformer, and even with his anxious disapproval. According to his account five zealots began on the day of Preparation (Wednesday before Holy Thursday) to remove the images from St. Martin's Church, and their example encouraged thirty-five others to purge in like manner the church of the Austin Friars on Easter Monday. The day following, the Town Council convened and threw the rioters into chains, but two hundred citizens forthwith assembled and assumed so threatening an aspect that the Town Council withdrew to the Wheelwrights' Gildhall, and even there was forced to decree the freeing of the prisoners.[2] This failed to satisfy the conspirators and further riots threatened, in the opinion of Œcolampadius, now an anxious, worn man,[3] to demolish altogether the house so divided against itself.[4]

The pacific advice of the Town Council that "no man should call another papist or Lutheran, heretic or adherent of the new faith or of the old, but that each should be left unembarrassed and unscorned in the exercise of his own belief" only enraged the Protestant majority further. On December 23, 1528, they accordingly handed in a petition, probably drafted by Œcolampadius, demanding the suppression of the mass. Though the Council was divided equally between the adherents of both Churches, in deference to this and under pressure

[1] On this and the following see B. Fleischlin: *Schweizerische Reformationsgeschichte*, 1908, ii, 433 ff, 455 ff, and N. Paulus: *Protestantismus und Toleranz*, 1911, p. 198 ff.

[2] Œcolampadius to Zwingli, April 16-17, 1528; Z. W. ix, 430 f.

[3] See his picture in *Ulrich Zwingli zum Gedächtnis*, p. 34.

[4] Œcolampadius to Zwingli, April 20, 1528; Z. W. ix, 436.

from the ambassadors of Zurich and Berne, they passed an ordinance forbidding the clergy to preach aught but the pure Word of God. Anyone in doubt as to what this was should be enlightened by a biblical discussion, and, if obstinate in his own opinion, should be relieved of pastoral duties.

It was now the turn of the Catholics to take the offensive. As Erasmus wrote to Sir Thomas More:[1] "There was good hope that moderate counsels would prevail, when two monks, one the preacher in the cathedral, the other preacher to the Dominicans, incited another tumult for us. They, indeed, made their escape, but others were smitten with evil." The two men referred to were Augustine Marius, or Mayr, and Ambrose Storch, commonly called Pelargus. When Erasmus's letter was published in the *Epistolæ Palæonæoi* in September, 1532, Pelargus took offense at these words and expostulated with their author.[2]

But the party that started the trouble this time was unable to control it. On the excuse that the Catholics had broken the law, the Protestant mob, composed chiefly of the poor[3] and doubtless aiming partly at social as well as at religious revolution, gathered in the public square on February 8th to the number of nearly a thousand, planted cannon in front of the Town Hall, and compelled the Council to expel the twelve Catholic members. During the following week the remaining images were destroyed, Catholic worship suppressed, and the existing ecclesiastical polity completely subverted. "Forsooth, the spectacle was so sad to the superstitious," wrote Œcolampadius, "that they had to weep blood. While we raged against the idols the mass died of sorrow."[4]

[1] September 5, 1529, Lond. xxvi, 21. LB. ep. 1074.

[2] *Bellaria Epistolarum Erasmi Roterodami et Ambrosii Pelargi vicissim missarum*, 1539, ep. 21.

[3] This point is emphasized by the chronicle of the Dominican John Stolz, published in W. Œchsli: *Quellenbuch zur Schweizergeschichte*, 1910, pp. 318 f.

[4] To Capito, February 13, 1529. B. J. Kidd: *Documents of the Continental Reformation*, 1911, p. 466.

This Reformer, now a dictator, had recently shown his thorough conversion to Protestanism by taking a wife, the young and pretty widow Wilibrandis Keller, born Rosenblatt. The mature age and delicate health of the bridegroom made him the butt of some sarcasm on account of this step. Boniface Amerbach mocked thus: "The wedding would wring a laugh even from old Sobersides. A man of advanced age, with shaking head and body so exhausted that one might call him a living corpse, has taken a pretty and delicious wife about twenty years of age. O Gospel! O marriage!"[1] Erasmus, too, commented mirthfully on the bridegroom's desire to mortify his flesh manifested by his choice of a particularly charming girl; for his part he disagreed with those who spoke of the Lutheran tragedy; it was really a comedy, as the happy ending showed.[2] The new gospellers, he remarked, "sought only two things: good pay and a wife, for the gospel gave them the rest—that is, the liberty to live as they pleased."[3]

His thought took a much more serious turn after the "battle of the idols" in 1529. He knew that now he must leave Basle lest people should think there was a pact between him and the sectaries who hated him so much.[4] He looked with dread of war on the confederacy between the German and Swiss cities, and with disgust on the iconoclasts who pulled down images "even to a fly," abolished mass, and allowed women and boys to sing hymns in German.[5] "The mass has been abolished," he wrote elsewhere,[6]

but what more holy has been put in its place? . . . I have never entered your churches, but now and then I have seen the hearers of

[1] T. Burckhardt-Biedermann: *Bon. Amerbach und die Reformation*, 1894, p. 207, March 15, 1528. Œcolampadius's announcement of his marriage to Zwingli, of same date, Z. W. ix, 390.

[2] To Adrian Rivulus, March 21, 1528. Lond. xix, 41; LB. ep. 961.

[3] To Pirckheimer, 1528 (1529), Lond. xix, 50; LB. iii, 1138 f.

[4] To Francis Vergara, March 17, 1528. Lond. xix, 28; LB. ep. 1029.

[5] To John Vergara, March 24, 1529. Lond. xix, 31. LB. ep. 1032.

[6] LB. x, col. 1578 f.

your sermons come out like men possessed, with anger and rage painted on their faces. . . . They came out like warriors, animated by the oration of the general to some mighty attack. When did your sermons ever produce penitence or remorse? Are they not more concerned with suppression of the clergy and the sacerdotal life? Do they not make more for sedition than for piety? Are not riots common among this evangelical people? Do they not for small causes betake themselves to force?

Naturally, feeling so ill at ease in a town "subverted by the Œcolampadian whirlwind,"[1] he and some of his friends decided to leave. When the citizens learned of his decision they did their best to persuade him to stay, Œcolampadius especially protesting his regret for a departure caused, as he saw it, by no act of tyranny or of unkindness.[2] A personal interview between the two former friends failing to effect a reconciliation,[3] the magistrates called upon Erasmus to explain first why he had covered his face with his cloak, which they took to be an insulting gesture, but which was really, he averred, due to toothache; and secondly what he meant by his joke in a recently published *Colloquy* about a man with a long nose, a sheep's head, and a fox's heart, which they applied to Œcolampadius, but which the author protested he had meant to characterize his own secretary.[4] Having finally satisfied them, he meditated a secret flight, but later thought better of it and took his departure openly, on April 13, 1529, escorted to his boat on the Rhine by a concourse of friends and at the last moment composing a farewell quatrain to the city, thanking her for hospitality and wishing her good fortune and never a guest more burdensome to her than he had been.[5]

[1] Glarean to Laski, S. A. Gabbema: *Illustrium Virorum Epistolæ*, 1669, ep. 8.

[2] Œcolampadius to Vadian, April 29, 1529, *Vadianische Briefsammlung*, iv, ep. 573.

[3] *Exemplum codicillorum Erasmi ad J. Œcolampadium*, Lond. xxx, 47.

[4] To Pirckheimer, July 15, 1529. Lond. xxiv, 10. LB. ep. 1066.

[5] *Bassler Chronick durch Christian Wurstisen*, 1883, p. 406. Fleischlin: *Schweizerische Reformationsgeschichte*, 1908, p. 465.

But he was not yet done with the Swiss and South German Reformers. A book he wrote in 1528 called *An Answer to some Articles of the Spanish Monks*[1] became the occasion of a new quarrel. One passage in it had remarked that formerly heretics were much more leniently treated than they had been of late, and proved this by citing a constitution on the Manichæans from the Justinian Code. This passage gave the opportunity for using the name of Erasmus in favor of toleration of the Protestants when their case came up before the Diet of Spires of 1529. There was a certain Reformer, Gerard Geldenhauer, of Nymegen, thence called Noviomagus, who had been educated at Deventer and Louvain, and later had been chaplain to Charles V and secretary to Philip of Burgundy, Bishop of Utrecht. Sent by him on an embassy to Wittenberg in September, 1525, he had gone over to the Reformers and began to occupy himself with teaching, finally winning a professorship in history at Marburg. In 1529 he was at Strassburg, and there he published an extract from the work last mentioned, together with letters of his own driving home the point, under the title *Erasmus's Annotations on Ecclesiastical and Imperial Laws Concerning Heretics*, the last two words being the display line of the title-page.[2]

Though there is no reason to think that Geldenhauer had any intention of exploiting the humanist's name unfairly, nevertheless, the attempt to drag him into the controversy once more, and on the side of the Lutherans, was bitterly resented by him. His wrath took form in *An Epistle against those who falsely boast that they are Evangelical*.[3] This comprehensive attack on the doc-

[1] *Apologia adversus Articulos quosdam per Monachos Hispanos exhibitos*, 1528. *Bibliotheca Erasmiana, s. v.*

[2] *Collectanea van Gerardus Geldenhauer Noviomagus* . . . uitgegeven . . . door J. Prinsen, 1901, pp. vii f, xli ff. The work appeared in Latin under the title *Des. Erasmi Roterodami Annotationes in Leges Pontificias et Cæsarias de Hereticis*, and in German as *Ejn Antwort des hochgelerten D. Erasmi die ersuchung und verfolgung der Ketzer betreffend*, 1529. See *Bibliotheca Erasmiana, s. v.*

[3] LB., x, 1573 ff, dated November 4, 1529.

trines and morals of the Reformers was answered in April, 1530, by *An Apology* published anonymously, but really written by Bucer.[1] In addition to defending the rightness of the Protestants, the author asserts that their cause is a growing one, and undertakes to prove once more that Erasmus either is secretly, or logically ought to be, favorable to it. This in turn drew a *Response*[2] in fifty pages repeating in more detail his argument from the alleged bad moral effect of the Reformation. This he proves from the fact that Luther had recently created a system of church visitation to regulate the disordered morals of the people, and by quoting the Reformer's own words that he would prefer the rule of the pope and of the monks to that of the new gospellers who used their freedom only to live a Sogdian life. From this and similar testimony wrung from the words of Melanchthon and of Œcolampadius, the author infers that the chances are, even from a human calculation of probability, overwhelmingly in favor of the Catholic Church, rather than in favor of Zwingli and Bucer, and therefore that if one cannot be sure it is safer to cast one's lot with the former. Among other faults of the Protestants he reckons their alleged hostility to learning, and especially slurs their newly founded academy at Nuremberg. His old admirer, Eoban Hess, being a professor in this institution, revenged himself by a flow of invective in Latin verse[3] against the "lurid old man" who from a god had turned into a stone idol. A few years later, however, he relented and composed a dirge for the "incomparable scholar."[4]

[1] Baum: *Capito und Bucer*, 1860, p. 464.

[2] *Erasmi Responsio ad epistolam apologeticam*, LB. ix, 1589. Published as *Epistola ad Fratres Germaniæ Inferioris*, in Lond. xxxi, 59, dated August 1, 1530.

[3] C. Krause: *Eoban Hess*, 1879, ii, 82 ff. There is a pun on Roter Damm (*i.e.*, red dam) concealed in the lines, "Deus ille invictus Erythri. . . . Saxeus iste Deus, luridus iste senex."

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

When, on October 11, 1531, Zwingli perished on the field of Cappel, and when, a few weeks later, Œcolampadius succumbed to a fever, Erasmus regarded the consequent prostration of the Swiss Protestant cause as a subject for rejoicing. "Here," he wrote to one of his Hungarian correspondents,[1] "we are freed from great fear by the death of the two preachers Zwingli and Œcolampadius, whose fate has wrought an incredible change in the mind of many. This is the wonderful hand of God on high; may he complete what he has begun to the glory of his holy name!" And to another friend: "It is well that the two leaders have perished, Zwingli in battle and Œcolampadius shortly after of an ulcer, for if Bellona had favored them, it would have been up with us."[2]

But, even while dissociating himself with violence from the paths of revolution, Erasmus was constantly expressing his own ideal of reform. He had another opportunity to do this when the Duke of Cleves sought his advice on the proper method of dealing with ecclesiastical problems.[3] Little is known of the negotiations, save that Conrad Heresbach was sent to Freiburg to confer with the humanist, who praised the ordinance which was promulgated in 1532.[4] Much of it, including some provisions usually thought to be Erasmian, can be found in earlier ordinances promulgated by the Dukes of Cleves as far back as 1491; on the other hand his direct influence can be seen in the increased biblicism and rationalism of the new laws, in the treatment of ritual, of baptism, the eucharist, the catechism, the worship of saints, and some ceremonies which, without being abolished, are given a very subordinate place. Perhaps the thing most significant of Erasmus's liberalism is that he should have

[1] To Nicholas Olaus, December 11, 1531. *Monumenta Hungariæ*, xxv, 175. Similar expressions in a letter to Queen Mary of Hungary, p. 176.

[2] LB. ep. 1205.

[3] J. Hashagen: "Erasmus und die clevischen Kirchenordnungen von 1532-33." *Festgabe F. von Bezold*, 1921, pp. 181 ff.

[4] LB., App., ep. 512.

consented to participate in an ecclesiastical reform promulgated by a temporal authority. Like most compromises, this ordinance was severely dealt with by both sides. At one moment, indeed, it attracted the attention of the Anglicans who were also trying to find a *via media*, and it might have attained international importance had the marriage of Henry VIII with Anne of Cleves been happier. But the German Protestants severely criticized it, and in 1543 the emperor, acting for the Catholics, forced the duke to kneel and confess that he had never meant by it to depart from the Church.[1]

For Erasmus, too, the only result of his attempts at reform was to excite afresh the fury of the monks. The plague of hatred endemic at Louvain caused him to apply both to Ferdinand and to Pope Clement for protection. The latter sent a special message by his emissary, Theodore Hezius, to Egmond and Vincent Dierx, requesting them to abstain from cursing Erasmus. Though these two theologians were still of opinion that the humanist favored the Reform, they perforce consented to forgo further animosities felt as scandalous to the Church.[2] To Ferdinand Erasmus complained that it was hard for him to suffer from both sides, and begged him to request his sister, Margaret, Regent of the Netherlands, to stop the mouths of those who railed on him at Louvain, especially of that brawler, Egmond.[3] Though Ferdinand complied, Erasmus was forced to apply again in a few years for another intervention on the part of the Chancellor Gattinara.[4] Maximilian of Zevenbergen, writing this news to his friend, Alfonso Valdes,[5] says that the monks are generally more hostile

[1] *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, i, 2108.

[2] Letter of Theodore Hezius to the papal secretary, Blosius, Liège, October 26, 1525 (?), P. Fredericq: *Corpus Inquisitionis neerlandicæ*, v, 1900, no. 782. H. de Jongh: *L'Ancienne Faculté de Théologie de Louvain*, 1911, p. 257.

[3] Lond. xx, 23, LB. ep. 710. November 20, 1524.

[4] April 29, 1527, Lond. xx, 6; LB. ep. 859.

[5] Flanders, October 25, 1527, *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish*, 1527-29, no. 223.

to Erasmus than to Luther or to any heretic worse than Luther, and that the head of this party is the dean, who teaches nothing, and charges a great price. He begs his friend to procure from the emperor a rescript providing that only the pope or the Grand Inquisitor of Spain could judge the humanist's books. He also hopes that the emperor may invite Erasmus back to Brabant, as the French king called back Lefèvre to Paris, for he thinks that Erasmus does not like his present home. The storm, though subsiding, did not die out[1] and on July 1, 1528, Erasmus was obliged to write a protest[2] against the stupid and rancorous book of Vincent. After this it was said that the monks were silenced: "Peace sleeps, or rather is buried."[3] But hatred soon became active again. On the rumor of his death in 1530 the monks of the Netherlands burst out into wild cries of triumph.[4] Some called him Errasmus from "erro," and Erasinus "the asinine,"[5] and one doctor bought his picture in order to give himself the delicate pleasure of spitting on it from time to time.[6] "This tyranny," he complained, "is the result of Luther's violent effort to give us freedom";[7] and again he asked; "What is the use of suppressing Lutheran books if these Pharisees intercept the victory?"[8] Cut by the tongues and stoned by the books

[1] Alfonso de Fonseca, Archbishop of Toledo, wrote Erasmus from Madrid, June 29, 1528, that his adversaries have at last learned to act with reason rather than oppression. LB. ep. 962. *Calender of Spanish Papers*, No. 479. Wrongly dated July 3d. He begs him to write against heresy and sends two hundred ducats; for he must be the "Romanus Præses" mentioned in the letter from Alfonso Valdes to Erasmus, dated Madrid, June 29, 1528. *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.* iv, no. 465. *Cf.* Valdes to Erasmus, Madrid, February 26, 1529. *Ibid*, v., no. 641. (Dated wrongly March 5th.)

[2] Lond. xix, 82.

[3] *Letters and Papers*, v, no. 641.

[4] From C. Susquet, Bourges, August 31, 1531, Enthoven, no. 87.

[5] To Alciat, March 31, 1531. Lond. xxvi, 6; LB. ep. 1177.

[6] To Mallarius, March 28, 1531. LB. ep. 1176.

[7] Erasmus to John von Riedt, October 1, 1528. F. and W. Krafft: *Briefe und Dokumente*, p. 144.

[8] Erasmus to Nausea, Day after Pentecost (June 10), 1527. *Epistolæ ad Fr. Nauseam*, 1550, p. 50.

of both sides, as he expressed it,[1] at times he waxed pessimistic, seeing no hope for Germany save in the intervention of heaven. The hatred of peasants for lords, of the people for princes and ecclesiastics, the religious differences, the menace of the Turk, the excessive luxury of the wealthy, all combined to make the outlook exceedingly dark. Presently, he feared, the signal for war would be given and neither he nor Freiburg, his present abode, would be safe.

It is remarkable that both Protestants and Catholics should have attacked him in the same manner, by making it appear that he agreed substantially with the Reformers. "The deadly parallel" was used with much effect by Albert Pio, Prince of Carpi, a nephew of Pico della Mirandola and now French ambassador at Rome, who prepared a work consisting largely of a comparison of passages from Erasmus and from Luther, with the conclusion: "Who reading these words will deny that Erasmus Lutherizes, or rather that Luther Erasmized when he began to go mad?" Hearing of the forthcoming attack, the humanist tried to ward it off by writing the distinguished author that he had nothing in common with Luther. Pio received the letter on November 13, 1525, and sent his *Hortatory Reply to Erasmus's Expostulation* to Basle on May 15, 1526, having it, about the same time, printed at Rome.[2] He is particularly severe on the *Folly*, and objects also the humanist's previous intercession for Reuchlin. Carpi sent the work to Paris where it was published in 1529, and where it was trans-

[1] Natali Divi Johannis (June 24), 1530. *Epistolæ ad Amerbachium*, no. 61.

[2] H. von der Hardt: *Historia literaria Reformationis*. On all this F. Lauchert: *Die Italienischen Gegner Luthers*, 1912, pp. 279 ff. It is there said that the first edition of the *Alberti Pii, Carporum Comitis, ad Erasmi expostulationem responsio parænetica*, was printed at Paris, 1529, and this is the first edition in the *Bibliotheca Erasmiana*. But an edition published at Rome, 1526, has been advertised for sale by J. Gamber, 7 rue Danton, Paris, catalogue lxiv, no. 1934. Extracts from the work are published in J. D. Mansi's *Supplement to Raynaldo's Annales Ecclesiæ*, 1755, xii, 150 ff, where the work is put in 1516! I tried to buy the work advertised by Gamber, but he wrote me, January 5, 1920, that it had been sold.

lated at the author's request by William de Montmorency, though the translation was not published.[1] Erasmus, who suspected that much of Pio's information came from Aleander,[2] wrote again to beg him not to publish, and also sent a missive to Pope Clement with assurances of his orthodoxy.[3] When at last he saw the attack he published a polite but sarcastic answer to it. This drew forth a very elaborate work in thirty-one books, pointing out passages in his works which Erasmus ought to alter or retract, which in turn caused the humanist to put forth a bitter *Apology against the ravings of Alberto Pio*. As this gentleman was now dead, his friend Juan Jinés de Sepúlveda advanced to defend his memory, performing the task with the more gusto as he was one of those treated with a certain condescension in the *Ciceronianus*.[4] About the same time another Italian Friar, Ambrosius Catharinus, attacked the humanist, saying: "Either Luther Erasmizes, or, as some have expressed it more harshly, Erasmus planted, Luther watered, but the devil gave the increase." Again, in 1540, Catharinus scented Pelagianism in the *Free Will*, and fiercely fell upon it.[5]

In other cases Erasmus's attempts to defend the Church excited the antipathy of her sons, who cried, "Non isto defensore!" His book on *Mending the Peace of the Church*, which aroused such dislike among the Lutherans, also proved a red rag to the Catholics. On November 5, 1533, the papal nuncio Vergerio sent it to Rome, with the information that one Augustine Eugubinus "had spoken worse of Germany than was ever written of any province and had even named Erasmus

[1] The version, which must have been done in 1530-31, exists in MS. See *Chantilly, Cabinet des Livres*, 2 v., 1900, i, p. 167.

[2] To Olaus, February 28 (1532), *Monumenta Hungariæ* xxv, 201; *cf.* Enthoven, no. 164, November 23, 1531.

[3] April 3, 1528, Lond. xx, 82; LB. ep. 961.

[4] Morel-Fatio: *Historiographie de Charles V*, 1913, p. 44.

[5] For all this see F. Lauchert: *Die Italienischen Gegner Luthers*, 1912, pp. 63, 78, 131.

as a fellow of Luther."[1] A few years later the same book was condemned by the University of Louvain.[2]

Trouble was also brewing in Spain.[3] The first serious manifestation of it came after Alphonso Fernandez of Madrid had translated the *Enchiridion* into Spanish.[4] The author was at once accused of heresy, especially of disapproving the punishment of heretics, of preferring marriage to virginity, and thinking ill of the Inquisition.[5] The fanatical fury of the monks, fanned to white heat by the presence of the English ambassador, Erasmus's old enemy Edward Lee, found vent in the publication of a list of errors attributed to the humanist. So much of a bogy did he become that a riot of monks was awed into order by the imprecation of the presiding officer: "May the wicked Erasmus catch you if you are not quiet!" The government, however, took the part of the scholar to the extent of imposing silence on his enemies, though they still questioned suspected persons, like Loyola,[6] about their supposed Erasmian views, and though in 1535 Charles V made it a capital offense to use the *Colloquies* in the schools.

All this time Erasmus was doing his best to assert his loyalty to the Catholic cause. One letter gives such prudent advice about keeping square with the Church

[1] W. Friedensburg: *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland*, i, 1892, p. 139. On Augustine Steuchus, called Eugubinus from his birthplace Gubbio in the Apennines, see Bossert in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, xvii, 1920, pp. 231 ff. A letter of Pflug, dated May 5, 1533, shows that Erasmus was then in correspondence with Eugubinus.

[2] Gossart: "Un livre d'Érasme reprouvé par l'Université de Louvain," *Bulletin de l'Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des Letters*, 1902, p. 438.

[3] On Erasmus in Spain see A. Bonilla y San Martin: *Luis Vives y la filosofia del renacimiento*, 1903, pp. 123 ff; H. C. Lea: *History of the Spanish Inquisition*, 1907, iii, 414 ff; H. C. Lea: *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain*, 890, pp. 35 ff.

[4] Letter of Alphonso Fernandez to Dr. Lewis Coronel, September 10, 1526, published by E. Böhmer: "Erasmus in Spanien," *Jahrbuch für romanische und englische Literatur*, iv, 1862, 158 ff.

[5] Bonilla y San Martin, "Érasme en Espagne," *Revue Hispanique*, xvii, 1907, 445.

[6] *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola*, ed. by J. F. X. O'Connor, 1900, p. 101.

that, notwithstanding its jocular form, one must believe it to contain an element of sincerity. Writing to his friend, Viglius van Zuichem,[1] he begs him to avoid getting mixed up with the sectaries, and illustrates the manner in which this may best be done by the story of the lawyer who fooled the devil. When the arch-fiend asked the man what he believed, the pious lawyer replied, "What the Church believes." Seeking to entangle him by asking what it was that the Church believed, Satan was foiled by the legal luminary's reply, "What I do."

With the prelates and governors of the Church Erasmus got on better than with the theologians. With his old friend Sadoletus[2] he kept up a friendly correspondence, and when Alessandro Farnese was raised to the tiara in 1534 under the name of Paul III, Erasmus wrote him his customary letter of congratulation[3] praising him as a true follower of St. Paul, and expressing his wishes for the peace of the church. He advises political neutrality on the part of the papacy, and the summoning of a general council in which the Protestants should be allowed to hope that they may obtain their just demands. He expects that this would restore unity, as he still thinks that the majority of Christians are untouched by heresy. The papal secretary replied that the pope was pressed for need of money, and, notwithstanding his desire to do something for Erasmus, was unable to send him a present, but promised another favor instead,[4] which came soon in the appointment of Erasmus to a provostship of Deventer.[5] Paul III him-

[1] LB. App. ep. 374. November 8, 1533. Luther had previously (1531) told a similar story about a charcoal-burner of Prague tempted by the devil. *Luthers Werke*, Erlangen, xxvi, 377 f.

[2] Two of these epistles reprinted in *Epistolæ P. Brunelli et aliorum*, ed. F. A. C. Grauff, 1837, pp. 381 f. See further Lauchert: *Die Italienischen Gegner Luthers*, 1912, p. 390.

[3] January 23, 1535. Published by Cardauns, *Quellen und Forschungen aus Italienischen Archiven*. xi, 202. (Rome, 1908.)

[4] April 14, 1535. Enthoven, no. 127.

[5] W. Vischer, *Erasmiana*, no. vii. Instrument giving it to Erasmus, August 1,1535. A letter from Paul III to Queen Mary of Hungary urging that Erasmus

self answered that he desired nothing better than the peace of the Church and that he counted on Erasmus's help in securing it.[1] About the same time the pope offered him the cardinalate, but, though he felt pleased and flattered at the offer, poverty, age, and infirmity prevented him from accepting it.[2]

But the friendship of the curia did not exempt Erasmus from the hostility of many Romans. A pasquinade probably written before his death represented him as "balancing the papal heaven against the Christian heaven," and compared him to a man attached to two columns by a rope around his middle, with a heavy sack tied to his feet and a sail between two horns on his head, the whole apparatus placing him in such an unstable position that every gust of wind turned him upside down and kept him whirling about.[3]

Much more unpleasant was a quarrel fastened on him by one Peter Curtius, who took offense at the slur on Italian courage contained in Erasmus' speaking of sarcastic proverbs, such as, "Learned as a Scythian, honest as a Carthaginian, warlike as an Italian." Curtius, or one of his friends, thereupon forged a letter purporting to come from Erasmus to Curtius, imitating the humanist's hand and even his style not unsuccessfully, but full of scurrility and indecency not without wit. Erasmus is represented as drinking freely with his friends Beatus Rhenanus and Henry Glareanus, and making merry with them over a carving of tipsy Bacchus. Erasmus is then made to explain that he had never written "an unwarlike Italian" (Italum imbellem) but "unwarlike Attalus" (Attalum imbellem), for Attalus

be allowed to occupy this position, printed in *Epp. ad Amerbach.* p. 119. iv. August 5, 1535. A certain Antony von Gumppenberg wrote Erasmus, August 21, 1535, from Rome that he has procured him the provostship, which is said to be worth 1,500 ducats per annum, though he fears it is not half that, and has a good house included. Förstemann-Günther, no. 225.

[1] Rome, May 31, 1535. Lond. xxvii, 26. LB. ep. 1280.

[2] To P. Tomitz, Bishop of Cracow, Basle, August 31, 1535. Lond. xxvii, 25. LB., ep. 1287.

[3] E. P. Rodocanachi: *La Réforme en Italie*, 1920, i, p. 148.

was a man called by Hecatæus unwarlike and timid. Such misprints are attributed to the malice of the printers, and the letter continues to give an extreme example of this, as shown in a misprint said to have been introduced into Erasmus's dedication of the *Christian Widow* to Queen Mary of Hungary. Where he had written "Atque mente illa usam eam semper fuisse, quæ talem feminam deceret," the printer had substituted for "mente illa" "mentula," thus turning a compliment into an obscene insult, which was said to have been printed in a thousand copies. Though when he heard of this forgery Erasmus at once protested against it, the imitation of his style was so good that the spurious letter was printed as his by Merula in 1607, and has found its way into the complete editions of his correspondence published since then.[1]

[1] The letter, dated Freiburg, January 11, 1535, in Lond. xx, 68; LB. 1276; *Erasmi Responsio ad Petri Cursii Defensionem*, LB. ix, 1747. *Cf.* Jortin: *Life of Erasmus*, i, 557 f; Nichols, i, p. xxxviii, 474.—A letter to Erasmus from Martin Dabrowski, dated Rome, 1536, gives him information of the political situation there. Published with one from Joseph Tectander, by Miaskowski, in *Pamiętnik literacki*, xiii, 1914-15, pp. 71-76.

CHAPTER XIV

LAST YEARS AT FREIBURG IN THE BREISGAU AND AGAIN AT BASLE

THE residence selected by Erasmus after leaving Basle was the Hapsburg city about forty miles north of that town, Freiburg in the Breisgau. Beautifully situated on the Dreisam at the foot of the Schlossberg in the Black Forest, this archiepiscopal see was adorned with one of the finest Gothic minsters in Germany and was the seat of the university founded by Albert VI, Archduke of Austria, in 1457. The attractions of the spot for the weary scholar consisted largely in the promise of freedom from the sects and in the presence of several warm friends, headed by Ulrich Zasius, the local professor of jurisprudence.

By the care of John Faber, Bishop of Vienna, he found awaiting him the handsomest house in Freiburg, then known as The White Lily, built by the Imperial Treasurer, James Villinger, in 1516 for the Emperor Maximilian.[1] The only drawbacks to his enjoyment of this royal residence were that he had to share it with Dr. Othmar Nachtigall, known in Latin as Luscinius, and that he was expected to pay rent.[2] But these proved so serious that after two years and a half he moved to another house, known as The Child Jesus, which he at

[1] H. Mayer: "Erasmus in Seinen Beziehungen zur Universität Freiburg," *Alemannia*, N. F. viii, 1907, pp. 287 ff. *Cf.* Förstemann-Günther, p. 345. In that day houses were named instead of numbered. This palace was later dubbed "The Whale," and is now Franciskanerstrasse 3, occupied by a wholesale wine merchant, but preserved in the old style.

[2] To More, September 5, 1529, Lond. xxvi, 21; LB. 1074; and Lond. xxx, 20, LB. ep. 1210, 1531.

THE OLD UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS AT FREIBURG IN THE BREISGAU

From a modern photograph

first rented and then bought for a thousand gulden, again selling it when he returned to Basle in 1535.[1]

Crowned with his own fame and armed with a special diploma from Ferdinand, Erasmus was received with high honors by the university. With him to Freiburg he brought the whole chapter of canons of the Basle cathedral, some of whom were given teaching positions.[2] Erasmus, who found the university well attended, but not well served in any faculty save that of jurisprudence, was on intimate terms with the professors, and was by them occasionally consulted as to appointments, and was allowed to keep a few students with him as *famuli*. On August 5, 1533, he enrolled as "Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus theologiæ professor,"[3] his chief object in doing so apparently being the desire to secure the professorial privilege of freedom from taxes. Just two months later he was taken into the university senate, on the stipulation that no heavy work be put upon him.

Never content long in one place, Erasmus in the autumn of 1531 paid another visit to Besançon, in order "to quench his thirst with good Burgundian wine." A letter of recommendation from the emperor secured him a splendid reception from the magistrates of the town, and perhaps an invitation to settle there.[4] He thought of going further to see Lyons, which he remembered from his visit of a quarter of a century before, but the war between Savoy and Berne and a letter from Charles V prevented him.[5]

[1] Now Schiffstrasse 7, occupied by a brewery, rebuilt but with an inscription reminding the visitor of Erasmus's sojourn. On the rent and other details, letters of J. Löble to Erasmus, Förstemann-Günther epp. 153, 155, 184.

[2] Glarean to Laski, Freiburg, October 6, 1529. S. A. Gabbema; *Illustrium et Clarorum Virorum Epistolæ*, 1669, ep. 8.

[3] H. Mayer: *Die Matrikeln der Universität Freiburg-im-Breisgau, 1460-1656*. 1907. Under date.

[4] Erasmus to Secretary Lambelin, dated October 26, 1532 (for 1531) and letter of Charles V, October 1, 1531, published by A. Castan "Granvelle et le petit empereur de Besançon," *Revue Historique*, i, 1876, p. 125.

[5] To Dalbonus, Abbot of Lyons, November 27, 1530 (for 1531), Lond. xxv, 41; LB. ep. 1147.

From Burgundy Erasmus brought back with him as amanuensis a young native of that region, Gilbert Cousin of Nozeroy,[1] or in Latin Gilbertus Cognatus Nozerenus, known later as a writer on law and history and as a Reformer. He took his office so seriously that his first published work, *On the Duties of Secretaries*, asserts that the choice of a literary assistant is no less important than the choice of a wife. His assiduity and good character won his master's love, even though this master would have preferred a Catholic. When Erasmus left Freiburg in 1535 Cousin attended to the business of winding up his affairs in that city, and then took a canonry at Nozeroy. The affectionate correspondence continued through the short interval until his master's death filled him with sorrow. In the Boston Public Library there is an edition of Erasmus's *Adages* of 1533 with numerous notes in the hand of Cousin and with two epigrams, one in Greek and one in Latin, under Erasmus's picture.[2] The former may be translated:

Who has not seen Erasmus living will
From this true picture know him. Could the skill
Of the artist but bring back his voice, such art
Would show to thee the image of his heart.
But what the artist could not, *he* has done;
For in his books his mind shines like the sun.
That is his truer image and more clear
Than is the one the artist painted here.
Know, therefore, that Erasmus thou dost find
When in his works thou dost admire his mind.[3]

[1] L. Febvre: "Un Secretaire d'Érasme: Gilbert Cousin et la Réforme en Franche-Comté," *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français*, lvi, 1907, 97 ff. Professor Edna V. Moffett of Wellesley College has kindly let me see her unpublished work *Gilbert Cousin* (Cornell Doctor's Thesis, 1907) with photographs of unpublished letters of Cousin. Other letters in G. Cognati *Opera*, 1562, i, 296 ff.

[2] *Adagiorum Opus Des. Erasmi Roterodami per eundem exquisitiore quam antehac unquam cura recognitum.* Froben. Basle. 1533. The notes in this volume were doubtless for the edition of Proverbs prepared by Cousin as a supplement to Erasmus. G. Cognati, *Opera*, 1562, i, 86 ff.

[3] Later published in LB. i (24).

And the Greek one thus:

> How Erasmus looked when old thou canst not tell
> From this design; 'tis not he, but his shell.[1]

These last words remind us that by this time Erasmus was getting to be a rather frail old man. "At Louvain," he wrote to Eoban Hess, recalling the visit of twelve years ago, "you saw the shadow of a man; now you would see the shadow of a shadow."[2]

Erasmus continued laboriously writing to the end. Besides new works, and editions of works by others superintended by him,[3] he kept producing revised editions of his own lucubrations. A new impression of the *Adages*, for example, he dedicated to Charles Blount, the son of his old friend, Mountjoy, in the following beautiful epistle:[4]

It must be your especial care, dear Charles, to be a true son of your accomplished father, the true heir of his excellence, not to degenerate from his culture and to prepare yourself to inherit his virtue even more than his advantages. For although he is of illustrious descent, and does not lack wealth suitable to his birth, yet if you consider him as a whole he is both more illustrious and richer in virtue and learning than in race and possessions. Although neither law nor custom allows children to take possession of their father's goods before their death, yet ought they, from their earliest infancy, to take their heritage of those things which are really goods. Your father's kindness desires this, and the most splendid foundations are laid for it in your training in the classics, as much as your age allows. You have no dull spurs to urge you on: first your father himself; then the example of that noble maid, of almost the same age as yourself, the Princess Mary, daughter of a learned king and a learned and pious queen, who now writes letters in good Latin and of content showing a nature worthy of her extraction; and finally you have the example of the daughters of the More family, that chorus of Muses, so that I do not see that anything is wanting to stimulate your ambition.

[1] Εἰκονα ταυτην ὃς τις ὁρᾳς τριγεροντὸς Ἐρασμοῦ
Οὐκ ἀνθρωπον ὁρᾳς ἀλλὰ τὸ σῦφαρ ὁρᾳς.

[2] To Hess, 1531, C. Krause: *Helius Eobanus Hessus*, 1879, i, 287, note.

[3] As *e.g.* the translation of Chrysostom undertaken by Germaine Brice at Erasmus's request. Förstemann-Günther, no. 140.

[4] Enthoven, p. 202. 1528. Blount's answer, June, 26, 1529, *ibid.*, no. 74. Erasmus later dedicated his Livy to Blount. Preface March 1, 1531. Lond. xviii, 15; LB. ep. 1160.

I am writing to say that you will now share with your father the possession of the *Adages*, which was long ago dedicated to him, by which you will detract nothing from his glory, but will add much to the book, for, if I mistake not, you will reap much fruit therefrom. It is nothing new to dedicate the same work to several people, and were it new I would answer for it that the father and the son who so much resembles him should be considered rather one person than two. For what is a son but a father renewing his youth in another self? And perchance your father, absorbed in the business of the court, has no more leisure for such things and willingly hands the lamp to you. Read it, therefore, Charles, and while reading think that it is Erasmus talking to you. The Lord Jesus keep and prosper your whole life, accomplished boy.

Young Blount answered this dedication with an epistle which drew forth from the humanist the rather fulsome exclamation, that if he could write such Latin unaided it was time for Erasmus to give up the pen.[1]

To John More, the son of another old friend, he dedicated his Aristotle,[2] and an edition of Ovid's *Nut*.[3]

A work of the kind in which Erasmus especially delighted was the *Apophthegmata* (first edition, Froben, March, 1531), a collection of "egregie dicta" attributed to famous men of antiquity. The foundation of his work was that of Plutarch.[4] As usual, he kept working at the piece after its publication, and in 1532 issued an edition in which the original six books were expanded to eight. Though not one of his more famous books, the *Apothegms*, attained considerable popularity, being translated into English by Taverner in 1540 and by Nicholas Udall in 1542.[5]

An extant copy of the *Apothegms* with notes in Luther's hand,[6] furnishes interesting testimony that, however

[1] To Lord Mountjoy, March 18, 1531. Lond. xxvi, 39. LB. 1174.

[2] February 27, 1531. Lond. xxviii, 13. LB. ep. 1159.

[3] In 1524. Lond. xxix, 26.

[4] Erasmus defended himself from the charge of having plagiarized from the recent translations of Plutarch by Filelfo and Rhegius. On the whole subject see *Bibliotheca Erasmiana. Apophthegmata.* 1901.

[5] *Ibid.*, 180.

[6] G. Kawerau: "Luthers Randglossen zu einer Schrift des Erasmus," *Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben*, 1889, p. 599. The

much the Reformer disagreed with the man of letters, he continued to buy his books. The severely critical animus of the annotator dissents from many of the sayings of the author. When, for example, Erasmus says, "Wise men judge an unexpected and sudden death the best," Luther adds, "These are the words of impiety."[1]

Other late works were the *Catechism or Explanation of the Apostles' Creed*, a brief summary of the necessary articles of faith,[2] and the *Method of Preaching*, covering a large part of the field of practical theology as well as that of homiletics. Originally written as a gift to Bishop Fisher it was, on his sad death, dedicated to Christopher von Stadion, Bishop of Basle.[3]

Friends and admirers without number either came, during these last years, to pay their homage to the prince of the humanists, or poured on him an immense quantity of letters. The correspondence published by himself and his executors fell off during the last four years of his life; for the years 1532-36 only seventy-two letters were thus published, and of them the majority not by but to him. Since that time from his letter-books at least three times that number has come to light; of these also the majority were by his friends. Kings, princes, prelates, and men of genius in affairs and in learning contributed to the treasury of his praise. With the King of Poland and with his bishop John Dantiscus he was in communication.[4] Queen Mary of Hungary, to whom he had dedicated his *Christian Widow*, replied with gracious invitations,

book is the edition of Leyden, 1541, was given away by Luther in 1543, and later came into possession of his son Paul.

[1] Of course sudden death was regarded as a divine punishment, and Luther's position is that of the Church.

[2] LB. v, 1133. Luther's poor opinion of this work also expressed in *Lauterbachs Tagebuch auf das Jahr 1538*, hg. von J. K. Seidemann, p. 48.

[3] LB. v, 767.

[4] Erasmus to King Sigismund, August 28, 1528, LB. iii, col. 1098; Miaskowski (*Jahrbuch für Philosophie*, xiv, 1900, p. 351) states that this letter should be in 1535, but he is wrong. Other correspondence of Erasmus with the Poles published by him, and also found in *Acta Tomiciana: Epistolæ, Legationes, Responsa, Actiones, Regestæ Sigismundi I.* Vols. 1-13, 1852-1915.

thanks, and compliments.[1] With those kings of commerce, the Fuggers, Erasmus was also in correspondence.[2]

Among the many promising youths who sought the acquaintance of Erasmus not in vain, one to make his mark later as a humanist and statesman, and as a supporter of the policy of Charles V and Philip II in the Netherlands, was Viglius van Aytta van Zuichem. In addition to the correspondence published in Erasmus's works, fourteen interesting letters, relating to the young man's studies in France, Italy, and Switzerland, have since come to light.[3]

Another correspondent was Ambrose Storch, or Pelargus, of Cologne, a well-known Catholic theologian in his day. Thirty-five of their letters and one of Erasmus to the Archbishop of Trier, not found elsewhere, were published by Storch in 1539.[4] Half the volume is taken up with Storch's *Judgment of Erasmus's Declamations* in answer to the *Censure published by the Theologians at Paris*: the author admits that the scholar has much reason to be angry with Beda, but blames him, nevertheless, for subscribing to Luther's impious dogma. When, in 1532, Erasmus revised his *Declama-*

[1] This published in *Oláh Miklós Levelezése; közli Ipolyi Arnold. Monumenta Hungariæ historica: diplomataria, xxv, 1875.* Olaus to Erasmus, Augsburg, July 1, 1530, p. 69; Erasmus to Olaus, July 7, p. 70; Erasmus to Queen Mary, December 12, 1531, p. 175; Mary to Erasmus, June 13, 1533, p. 378; Erasmus to Olaus, February 28, 1532, p. 201; Olaus to Erasmus, July 26, 1532, p. 226, and other letters.

[2] Letter of Antony Fugger to Erasmus, April 7, 1530, thanking him for a dedication of Xenophon. *Zeitsch. d. hist. Vereins f. Schwaben und Neuberg*, xxi, 1894, p. 56.

[3] C. P. Hoynck van Papendrecht: *Analecta Belgica*, 6 parts, 1743. Letters vol. ii, part i, pp. 9 ff., dated 1529-35. Life of Van Zuichem (1507-77), in vol. i. In the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, there is a portrait called "Zwingli," now known to be of Van Zuichem by the artist Nicholas of Neuchâtel. *Zwingliana*, 1918, p. 347.

[4] *Ambrosii Pelargi et Erasmi Roterdami Bellaria Epistolarum*, 1539. A copy of this excessively rare book (not in the British Museum) is at the Bodleian, Oxford. I have not seen it myself, but my friend, Prof. Carrington Lancaster, kindly made an abstract of it for me, copying one letter entire and selections from others. On Pelargus see further: N. Paulus: *Die Deutschen Dominikaner im Kampfe gegen Luther*, pp. 204-208. The letters are dated 1529-34.

VIGLIUS VAN ZUICHEM

Portrait by Nicholas Neuchatel. Original at the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, incorrectly called "Zwingli"

tions for a new edition he wrote the fact to Pelargus and added:

> Wherefore I ask you to send me your notes that I may see if they have anything useful to me. For it is not my intention to mix anything Lutheran in my writings. If you please to send them, do not bother to copy them, for I have secretaries who can read anything. However, if you should wish to copy them, I should be grateful. But do not undertake the labor until I have had a sample of your work and we have talked it over together.

The correspondence shows the good humor with which the greater man allowed the lesser to criticize his *Folly* and *Colloquies*; the break came when the lesser writer took umbrage at a published reference to himself and Mayr as having part in the tumults at Basle.

A philosopher and scientist famous in his own day and esteemed even now was Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim, a man who stood outside of the two hostile camps of the Christian religion. The crowning labor of this versatile man was a defense of philosophic doubt, or rather an attack on the pretensions of learned men, and at the same time a plea for a simple biblical Christianity, entitled: *An Oration on the Uncertainty and Vanity of Science and of Art and on the Excellence of God's Word.* This he sent for an opinion to Erasmus, who professed to like it.[1]

With a brilliant circle of humanists in Southern France Erasmus was brought into contact by his publication of Josephus. Having heard of an important manuscript of this author in possession of George d'Armagnac, Bishop of Rodez and an officer of the King of Navarre, the great scholar wrote him asking to borrow it, in a letter dated November 19, 1531.[2] It happened, however, that this codex had passed into the

[1] On Agrippa see lives by H. Morley, 1856, and Prost, 1881. Some letters to Erasmus and Agrippa, not found elsewhere, are in *H. C. Agrippæ Opera*, Lugduni, *s.a.*, Lib. vi, epp. 31, 36; lib. vii, epp. 6, 9, 17, 18, 19, 38, 40, 1531-33.

[2] Lond. xxv, 3; LB. ep. 1203 with the mistaken superscription "Episcopo Rivensi" (Bishop of Rieux) instead of "Episcopo Ruthenensi" (Bishop of Rodez).

possession of Jean de Pins, Bishop of Rieux, to whom d'Armagnac forwarded Erasmus's request, and wrote the latter of the fact. On January 28, 1532, De Pins replied to d'Armagnac that he would send the manuscript to the humanist had he not already promised to give it for printing to the publisher of Lyons, Sebastian Gryphius.[1]

But Erasmus was not thus to be foiled. He had already known De Pins at Bologna, some twenty-five years before, and accordingly on March 20, 1532, wrote him the letter[2] of which part is here translated:

To me, certainly, that was no unlucky mistake which has given occasion to revive the memory of our pleasant intercourse and literary studies at Bologna. I thought that there was a Greek Josephus in possession of the Very Reverend Bishop of Rodez, but he has written that it is now in your possession, having returned to you by right of ownership. Your kindness, which I formerly learned to know and to try at close quarters, makes me hope that you will lend that volume for some months to Jerome Froben, who has decided to publish, with the aid of several learned men, that historian, who, in spite of his fame, has been wretchedly corrupted by the ignorance of copyists and of translators. . . . I should like to know what the oracle says about our friend Bombasius, for I have been able to hear nothing of him for many years.

This innocent epistle aroused the suspicions of the vigilant inquisitors of Southern France. Dolet has told how De Pins was called before the town council of Toulouse and forced to hear the letter read and translated to them.[3] He himself describes the same experience in a letter written in reply to the last.[4]

Sweetest Erasmus: When your delightful and pleasant letter was brought to me, you would hardly believe the tumult that it created by falling into the hands of certain men who appear to look at you askance and to say evil about you. They tried secretly to

[1] This letter first published by L. Thuasne in *Revue des Bibliothèques*, xv, 1905, pp. 203-208. It is dated "Toulouse." On Gryphius see article by R. C. Christie, *Historical Essays by Members of Owens College, Manchester*, 1902, pp. 307-23.

[2] Nimes MS., no. 215, fol. 168 verso. See text in Appendix II, p. 448.

[3] Quoted by Thuasne, *loc. cit.*, and see R. C. Christie: *Dolet*,[2] 1899, 66 ff.

[4] Nimes MS., 215, fol. 165 verso. See text in Appendix II, pp. 448 f.

smell out some way in which I could be either threatened or drawn out. But I think their only reason was that they have been too vehemently affected by the reproach of certain persons[1] whom you attack in your books, and wound and harass too much, as they have complained both to me and to others. When these men hoped to find something important in your letter, as though Erasmus and De Pins were conspirators against the realm, they first made a great fuss and then while I, by chance, was absent from the city on a short vacation, they threw into prison the poor secretaries who had brought the letter from Paris, on the ground that these men sought to evade them and did not seem willing to deliver the letter at once into their hands. When they, smitten with madness though they were, had returned to good sense and moderation, they insisted on unsealing the letter in my presence and with my consent. When I readily consented and when they found that there was nothing in the letter except something about a certain Joseph, then you may believe that their faces fell and that they acted like men taken unawares. . . .

De Pins then goes on to tell how he had once procured the manuscript of Josephus from the heritage of Filelfo and Leonardo Giustiniani; how he had lent it to Peter Gylli, a scholar in the service of George d'Armagnac, how he had now promised to send it to Sebastian Gryphius at Lyons to be printed. He added that he heard that Bombasius had perished in the sack of Rome.

But in the meantime the manuscript had been returned by Gylli to George d'Armagnac, and by him forwarded to an obscure proof-reader of Sebastian Gryphius, one François Rabelais by name, with instructions to send it on to Erasmus when he got a reliable messenger. The opportunity came when Hilaire Bertulph, one of the humanist's secretaries and a man already known to the French court, visited Lyons.[2] Rabelais, who had been studying Erasmus with admiration, seized this occasion to write to him, partly to express his obligations, partly to disabuse the humanist of the idea that the book written by J. C. Scaliger was composed by Aleander. A part of his letter is here translated:[3]

[1] *I.e.*, the humanists attacked in the *Ciceronianus*.
[2] A. Roersch: *L'Humanisme Belge*, 1910, pp. 75 ff.
[3] Förstemann-Günther, ep. 182, dated November 30, 1532.

George d'Armagnac, the famous Bishop of Rodez, recently sent me *Flavius Josephus's Jewish History of the Sack*[1] and asked me, for the sake of our old friendship, that, when I found a *reliable* man setting out I should send it to you at the first opportunity. I gladly seized that handle and occasion, kind father, of showing by a pleasing service with what devotion and piety I love you. I call you father; for, as we daily see that pregnant women nourish offspring which they have never seen and protect them from the harsh outer air, *the same has happened to you* who have educated me who am unknown to you and of simple estate. Thus have you hitherto nourished me with the most chaste breasts of your divine learning, so that, did I not ascribe to you alone my whole worth and being, I should be the most ungrateful of all men who are now alive or ever will be. Hail again and again, most beloved father, father and glory of your country, champion and *defender* of letters and unconquered fighter for the truth.

This more than enthusiastic letter would lead one to expect that Rabelais was a careful student of Erasmus's works, and a thorough investigation has proved that the *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel* do in fact borrow immensely from the *Folly* and the *Colloquies*, as well as from other works.[2] To Erasmus, however, the young physician of Lyons was quite unknown, and though he certainly received the letter it is probable he did not answer it.

With Rabelais's letter Erasmus therefore received the Josephus, which he acknowledged in a note of January 30, 1533,[3] and which he forthwith prepared for the press.[4] When De Pins requested the return of the manuscript,[5] Erasmus penned the following interesting epistle, dated November 13, 1534.[6]

Excellent Bishop: For your constant benevolence toward me I am, as I ought to be, most grateful. I am forced to endure various inconveniences. Luther has written against me a simply furious letter, so wickedly mendacious that it may displease even the most

[1] *I.e.*, of Jerusalem. The words in italics are in Greek in the original.
[2] Thuasne: *Études sur Rabelais*. 1904. Chap. ii. "Rabelais et Érasme."
[3] Nîmes MS., 215, fol. 170. See Appendix II, p. 450.
[4] *Antiquitatum Judaicarum libri xx*. Basle, 1534.
[5] Nîmes MS., 215, fol. 167. See Appendix II, p. 451.
[6] Nîmes MS., 215, fol. 169. See Appendix II, p. 451.

ardent Lutherans. Nicholas Herborn, the Franciscan Commissary General this side of the Alps, has published some Lenten sermons in which he spatters me with bitter invective. There are some men who read libels against me privately among their fellows, among whom was Busch, recently deceased. Nor does the least part of my troubles come from my servants. I recently nursed a viper in my bosom, thinking I had a faithful servant, but he would have killed me could he have done so with impunity. In addition to this, old age weighs on me more and more, and gout tortures me.

Another short letter of May 19, 1535, gave news of Bombasius's death.[1] A greeting from De Pins,[2] on June 24, 1536, closed the record of friendship of the two old men, both of whom were near death.

While the adoration of so many brilliant men must have given him much happiness, the last years of Erasmus were darkened by the hideous tragedy that fell upon his English friends under the tyranny of Henry VIII. The dramatic disgrace of Wolsey cast, in October, 1529, from the height of power to the depth of disfavor, made an immense sensation throughout Europe. "Oh fickle tide of human fortune!" exclaimed the humanist when he first heard of it.[3]

When the great seal was given to Sir Thomas More he at once wrote his old friend: "Long having meditated leisure, lo I am unexpectedly thrown into the stream of affairs. . . . My friends here exult vehemently and congratulate me . . . you perhaps will pity my fortune."[4] Far from reassured by the news, Erasmus foreboded further trouble and a great slaughter, unless some genuine hero should arise to prevent it.[5]

[1] Nîmes MS., 215, fol. 169. Appendix II, p. 451 f.

[2] Beroald to Erasmus, Enthoven, no. 141.

[3] "O rerum humanarum Euripum"; *cf. Adagia*, chil. i, cent. ix, prov. lxii, LB. ii, 357. To Francis, Treasurer of Besançon, December 10, 1529, Lond. xxvi, 23; LB. ep. 1080. *Cf.* Luther's comments on the same matter, Enders, vii, 228.

[4] October 28, 1529, "ex rusculo nostro" (Chelsea), Förstemann-Günther, ep. 113.

[5] Erasmus to Amerbach, January 14 (1530), *Epistolæ ad Amerbachium*, no. 11. The year-date is given by the reference to Campeggio's leaving England, which happened in October, 1529.

All too soon came confirmation of the gloomy presentiment. Unable to approve Henry's marriage with Anne Boleyn, or to allow his title as Supreme Head of the Church, More resigned the great seal on May 15, 1532, writing to Erasmus that this step had not been forced upon him by the king,[1] and at the same time expressing his hatred of the sectaries, particularly of Tyndale and of Melanchthon. The letter was so long delayed in Saxony that everyone knew of the event before the news reached Erasmus. Thinking to help his friend, perhaps, the humanist wrote, in the form of an open letter[2] to Faber, Bishop of Vienna, a charming description and eulogy of More's household, adding his assurance of the ex-Chancellor's safety: "For I know the nature of that most humane prince, and the constancy with which he cherishes the friends he has once embraced, and how he hardly ever removes any of them from his favor, even though he surprises them in some human error. . . . I doubt not that for good reasons More begged the king to dismiss him."

Vain sop of flattery tossed to a savage beast! Now began in earnest the slaughter of the noblest in the kingdom. On May 4, 1535, three Carthusian priors, the Vicar of Isleworth, and Dr. Richard Reynolds of the Bridgettine monastery of Sion were sent to the block on the charge of treason. A still greater shock to the civilized world came when the two ornaments of England, John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More, were thrown into the Tower and then executed, the one on June 22d, the other on July 6th. Of all this Erasmus wrote on August 12th:[3]

[1] More to Erasmus, June 14, 1532, Lond. xxvii, 9; LB. ep. 1223. Another letter without date, Lond. xxvii, 10. Dr. F. M. Rogers: "A Calendar of the Correspondence of Sir T. More," *English Historical Review*, xxxvii, 1922, 546 ff, dates this second letter June, 1533.

[2] No date, but written toward the end of 1532 and first published in the *De præparatione ad Mortem*, sent to England, *circa* January, 1534. Lond. xxvii, 8; LB. ep. 426.

[3] To Bartholomew Latomus, Basle, August 12, 1535. LB. ep. 1286.

Hither many noble Frenchmen have fled, fearing the winter storm, but they are now called back. "The lion will roar," says the prophet, "and who will not be afraid?" A similar terror, from a different cause, has settled on the souls of the English. Capital punishment was exacted of certain monks, among whom was a Bridgettine, first dragged along the ground, then hung, and afterward quartered. A persistent and probable rumor says that when the king knew that the Bishop of Rochester had been elected into the college of cardinals, he had him quickly led forth and beheaded. For some time Thomas More has been in prison, having given up his offices. This is too true. It is also said that he has been executed, but of this I have as yet had no certain tidings. Would that he had never mixed in this perilous business, but had left theology to theologians!

Within two weeks Erasmus knew the worst[1] and then wrote: "In More I seem to have died, so much did we have one soul, as Pythagoras said. But such are the surges of human fate."[2] Shortly after this there was published an open letter on the death of Fisher and of More, purporting to be from William Courinus Nucerinus to Philip Montanus; it was commonly attributed to Erasmus, but was doubtless written, under his direction and inspiration, by his *famulus*, Gilbert Cousin.[3] After an account of the trial and execution taken from a newsletter from Paris[4] with the report of an eyewitness, the heroism and nobility of the suffering pair are graphically described. The writer would have liked to persuade the king to be less severe toward these lights of Britain, at the same time that he would have advised the men not openly to defy the storm, for time heals many things

[1] He was informed by Chapuys, the imperial ambassador in England; see his letter to L. Ber, September 12, 1535, published in *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, 38 (1921), p. 100 f.

[2] Erasmus to Tomitz, August 31, 1535, Lond. xxvii, 25; LB. ep. 1287.

[3] It is dated July 23, 1535, and is reprinted LB. App. ep. 378. It was printed at Basle, on which and on the attribution of the authorship to Erasmus see Oporin to Blaurer, October 13, 1535, *Briefwechsel der Blaurer* hg. von T. Schiess, i, 749, 753; *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, x, p. 188, note. Philip Montanus was a real man known to Erasmus; *cf.* LB. epp. 1081 and 1264. The author is given as Gulielmus Courinus Nucerinus, a transparent pseudonym for Gilbertus Cousinus Nozerenus.

[4] *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*, viii, no. 996.

which force cannot mend. Those who serve kings ought to dissemble in some matters, so as to get at least part of their objects. More is described as a man of unparalleled urbanity and kindness, who befriended all the learned, not only those of his own nation, but Irishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, and Hindus. The writer of the letter, though he says he has never seen More, has shed many tears for him. What then will be the feelings of Erasmus, who loved More as his own soul?

Shortly after Erasmus's death there appeared a poem on the death of Fisher and More, attributed to him, though it never found its way into his collected works.[1] If really by him, and we have no special reason to doubt its authenticity,[2] it gives the strongest representation we have of Erasmus's real feelings. Henry is arraigned severely for lust and tyranny and for usurping the papal prerogative:

> Eijceret Moecham, Thalamique in iura vocaret
> Legitimam uxorem solitoque ornaret honore.
> Ispe sibi ius pontificis nomenque sacratum
> Quae late sua regna patent usurpat. . . .

In many of his letters, too, Erasmus speaks with pathos of his loss. He had intended to dedicate his *Method of Preaching* to Fisher, but a storm has bereft him of that godly prelate, together with More and Warham, than whom England never had nor ever would have anything greater.[3] Some, however, were naturally surprised that

[1] *Incomparabilis . . . D. Erasmi . . . in sanctissimorum martirum Rofensis Episcopi ac Th. Mori. . . . Heroicum Carmen.* Mense Septembre. MDXXXVI. [Colophon] Hagenau. Bound with other matter, namely: *Antiqua Epistola Nicolai Papæ I.* (Dedication dated Meissen, February 27, 1536, by editor.) And *Defensio Clarissimorum Virorum J. Fyscheri Episcopi Roffensis et Thomae Mori Baronis. . . . adv. R. Sampsonem.* Per J. Cochlaeum. (Strong pamphlet against the king.) Cochlæus corroborates the authenticity of Erasmus's poem in his *Commentaria de actis et scriptis M. Lutheri*, first published 1549. I quote from the edition of 1568 (Harvard), p. 303.

[2] Jortin: *Erasmus*, ii, 289, doubts it because he thinks Erasmus would not have had spirit enough to write it.

[3] To Christopher von Stadion, August 6, 1535; Lond. xxix, 42.

he published nothing openly on their deaths.[1] When, shortly before his death, he heard of the reaction in England and of the execution of Anne Boleyn, who had been claimed by the Protestant party, Erasmus wrote to his informant: "You tell prodigies of England. Would that these things had been found out before those good men had been put to death!"[2]

Sick at heart and "almost killed with cares," Erasmus now prepared to leave Freiburg. A trying personal experience, the theft of many of his valuables, united with the clamor of the monks and theologians to drive him from that town,[3] to which he never wanted to return again.[4] The house which he had bought for 624 gold florins,[5] and on which he had spent much for repairs, for floors, and for glass windows, he sold, on October 30, 1535, to one Peter Ryd.

When he returned to Basle in the summer of 1535 he was warmly greeted by the university with a gift of hippocras, malvoisie, and other spiced wines, and saluted by a delegation of professors. The only untoward incident was due to the heartiness of the handshake he received from Oporinus, which was so cordial that it made him cry out with pain.[6] After just a year in his old home, while superintending some printing, he met his death from an attack of dysentery. On June 6, 1536,[7] he knew himself to be dying, though the end did not come until the night of July 11th-12th. His last words

[1] Damian a Goes to Erasmus, Padua, January 26, 1536; LB. App. ep. 331.

[2] Erasmus to Schetz, Basle, June 1, 1536; extract published by A. Roersch: "Quarante-six lettres inédites d'Érasme," in *Mélanges offerts à M. E. Picot*, tome I, 1913, p. 10.

[3] To John Choler, *Pentas epistolarum*, [pub. by Vesenmeyer], 1798, p. 4, dated September 9, 1533.

[4] Erasmus to L. Ber, Basle, September 12, 1535, pub. in *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, Band 38, 1921, pp. 100 f.

[5] Say $1,400, or £280.

[6] T. Burckhardt-Biedermann: "Die Erneuerung der Universität zu Basel 1529-39," *Beiträge zur vaterlandische Geschichte*, N. F., iv, 1896, p. 428.

[7] Letter to Tiedemann Giese, in *Bibliotheca Warmiensis oder Literaturgeschichte des Bisthums Ermland*, 1872, p. 103, note 38.

were: "O Mother of God, remember me!"[1] "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me! I will sing the mercy and judgment of the Lord!" These were repeated over and over again until with his last breath the dying man said in the Low German of his childhood, "Lieber Gott" ("Dear God"), and expired.[2] A splendid funeral was accorded him by the magistrates and men of note at Basle. He was laid to rest in the cathedral,[3] and a stone statue was placed in a public square to commemorate him.[4]

[1] This according to the testimony of his Belgian secretary, Lambert Coomans. See *Bulletin de l'Académie Royale de Belgique*, tome 9, 1842; F. Nève: *La Renaissance des Lettres et l'Essor de l'Érudition en Belgique*, 1890, p. 28.

[2] On Erasmus's removal to Basle, to Tomitz, August 31, 1525; Lond. xxvii, 25; LB. ep. 1287. On his death: Stromer to Spalatin (July 15?), 1536, Horawitz: *Erasmiana*, ii, no. 11, p. 608. Amerbach to Spalatin, July 11, 1536, K. & W. Krafft: *Briefe und Dokumente aus der Zeit der Reformation*, p. 75. Boniface Amerbach to Alciat, April 4, 1537; Burckhardt-Biedermann: *Bon. Amerbach und die Reformation*, p. 310; Herwagen to Rhenanus, July 17, 1536, *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, hg. von Horawitz und Hartfelder, no. 296; Rhenanus to Hermann of Wied, August 15, 1536, Allen, i, pp. 53 f. Stromer to Oswald Lasan, 1536, in *Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben*, *v*, *103* (1885), and the same in *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, xxvi, 138 (1905).

[3] Fynes Moryson: *Itinerary*, 1907, i. 59 f.

[4] Bartholomew Sastrow saw the tomb here in 1549. *Social Germany in Luther's Time*, translated by Vandam, 1902, p. 264.

CHAPTER XV

THE GENIUS OF ERASMUS AND HIS PLACE IN HISTORY

AS the living man is known by the company he keeps, so the mind of the great dead can be surely placed by observing the character of those among posterity who praise and follow and of those who depreciate and detest him. It is fitting and natural that, whereas the hunt of obloquy and misunderstanding which pursued Erasmus during his last years continued for generations after his death among the partisans of either side, on the other hand his work and character have received the most cordial recognition from liberal-minded and rational Protestants, and from not a few of the less militant free-thinkers. His truest disciples have been found neither among those who sacrificed reason at the altar of faith, nor among those who cast off piety together with superstition and dogma, but among the seekers for reason in religion and for a culture emancipated from the bondage of the past but not ungrateful to the precious heritage of the ages.

After his works had been burned and banned by various Catholic countries,[1] after he had been branded at the Council of Trent as a Pelagian and an impious heretic,[2] his writings were officially prohibited by the Church, now

[1] *Colloquies* were prohibited in Franche-Comté on July 15, 1535; the *Moria*, the *Paraphrases* and the *De Conscribendis Epistolis* on March 8, 1537; see L. Febvre: *Notes et Documents sur l'Inquisition en Franche-Comté*, 1912, pp. 178, 183. His works would have been prohibited in Belgium in 1540 but for Cardinal Granvella, Enders xiii, 222; they were burned at Milan January 29, 1543, *Briefwechsel des Beatus Rhenanus*, p. 488.

[2] P. Sarpi: *Histoire du Concile de Trent, traduite en Français par* Amelot de la Houssaie, 1699, pp. 159, 224.

in part, now altogether. The Spanish Inquisition first forbade the reading of the *Folly*, of the *Epistles*, of the *Paraphrases of the Gospels*, and of the *Refutations of Luther*, and then proceeded, in the words of Milton, "to rake through his entrails with a violation worse than the tomb," publishing, in the Expurgatorial Index of 1584, a list of passages to be deleted from his works on account of error, a list so long that it filled fifty-five quarto pages. But even this was found insufficient; the enumeration of his errors in the Expurgatorial Index of 1640 swelled to fifty-nine double-columned folio pages.[1] Rome soon followed the lead of Spain. In 1559 Paul IV not only put Erasmus in the first class of forbidden authors, made up of those all of whose works were condemned, but added after his name: "All his commentaries, notes, criticisms, colloquies, epistles, translations, books, and writings, even if they contain absolutely nothing against religion or about religion." A Commission of the Council of Trent relaxed this censure slightly by prohibiting the *Colloquies*, the *Folly*, the *Tongue*, the *Institution of Christian Marriage*, the Italian translation of the *Paraphrase to Matthew*, and all other works on religion until expurgated by the Sorbonne. As this included the *Adages*, there was little left, and in fact he was treated practically as an author of the first class.[2] His friends, Rhenanus, Wicel, and Zasius, were also put on the Index, apparently more because of their connection with him than for any other reason.

While some Catholic doctors, like Raynaldus, labored to justify the censure of the Church by proving Erasmus an atheist, others felt his charm and tried to save what fragments they could from the wreck of his anathematized remains. The Jesuits particularly learned the value of his educational treatises; one of the greatest of them, Peter Canisius, avowing that the man had deserved well

[1] H. C. Lea: *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain*, 1890, p. 42.

[2] F. H. Reusch: *Der Index der Verbotenen Bücher*, 1883, i, pp. 347-367; H. C. Lea, *op. cit.* pp. 34 ff.

ERASMUS

From a painting by Holbein. Original at the Louvre

of letters and only by meddling with theology, to which he had no call, had ruined his own reputation.[1]

Thus began to crystallize the now common Catholic judgment that Erasmus was a man of brilliant parts but of weak character. When Alexander Pope had told of the arts lost during the Middle Ages, he added;[2]

> At length Erasmus, that great injured name,
> (The glory of the priesthood and the shame!)
> Stemmed the wild torrent of a barb'rous age,
> And drove those holy Vandals off the stage.

A century later the great French Catholic orator and ecclesiastic, Lacordaire, who spoke with respect of "Luther's rich and puissant nature," and who admired Erasmus as the "first academician of the world" and the modeller of exquisitely elastic prose, sneered at him because, when the thunder growled and he might have given one party or the other the support of his blood, "this good fellow had the courage to—remain academician, and thus expired at Rotterdam (!) just as he had finished writing a phrase still elegant but now despised."[3]

Useless to quote all the verdicts of eminent Catholics. They are well summed up in the words of that distinguished scholar, Ludwig von Pastor:[4]

> A great scholar but a weak character, a man of brilliant attainments, by the many-sided versatility of his mind, Erasmus exercised by his numerous writings prodigious influence on his time. In spite of all the services he rendered to classical study, it must be admitted that, though he never separated himself openly from the Church, Erasmus did much by his attacks, not only on degenerate scholasticism, but on scholasticism itself, as well as by his venomous irony, to lessen respect for the authority of the Church and for faith itself among a large number of highly cultivated men of the day. Thus did he prepare the way for the impetuous and impassioned Luther.

[1] J. Janssen: *Geschichte des deutschen Volkes*, 20te Auflage besorgt durch L. von Pastor, 1915, ii, p. 19, note 2.

[2] *Essay on Criticism*, lines 693-696.

[3] A. Sainte-Beuve: *Causeries du Lundi*, 1857, i, 239 f. "Le Père Lacordaire, Orateur."

[4] Pastor: *History of the Popes*, English translation ed. by Kerr, vii, 315.

Quite different is the opinion of another great Catholic scholar, in some respects a liberal, Lord Acton, who called Erasmus the greatest figure of the Renaissance, not only as eminently international, but also as the most capable of all men of living by historical imagination in other times. Though the narrow range of his sympathies is noted, debarring him from art and metaphysics, his diagnosis of contemporary demoralization as due to ignorance and misgovernment, is indorsed.[1]

From the Reformers and their heirs, the conservative Protestants, Erasmus suffered the singularly cruel fate of being pillaged by one hand and stabbed by the other. While they approved much of his program and learned at his feet how to turn the criticism both of morals and of dogmas against the Catholics, they were furious at his refusal to join their ranks, and frightened by the implications of a spirit more emancipated than their own. With much violence, it has been well said,[2] early Protestanism separated from the historical and philological theology of the Christian Renaissance. The deep sense of opposition was not confined to the Reformers, for the humanist could no more accept their solifidian and predestinarian doctrines, based on a fundamentally antirationalistic mysticism and inimical, as it seemed, to practical morality, than *they* could indorse the spirit of free inquiry and of philosophic doubt that pervaded the writings of the critic. Melanchthon, it is true, assimilated his teaching and tried to pass it on, but his fate was to be called a traitor to the Lutheran cause and to be so assailed that he longed for death to free him from "the rage of the theologians." Far more typical of the attitude of the Reformers was the conduct of Luther, who first studied, marked, and inwardly digested the works of the older scholar and then fulminated anathemas at the skeptic he found lurking under the mask of erudition. Though they controlled their tongues

[1] *Lectures on Modern History*, 1906, pp. 86 ff.
[2] E. Troeltsch: *Protestantism and Progress*, 1912, pp. 48 ff.

better, there is no doubt that Zwingli and Œcolampadius, after sitting at Erasmus's feet, came to feel about him much as did Luther, and were regarded by him in much the same light. Their successors also thought, as did the Catholics, of prohibiting his writings, or at least those repugnant to their theology.[1]

Calvin seldom if ever praised Erasmus, though he borrowed from him some of his ideas and though he cited him no less than one hundred and fifty times as a critical or exegetical authority. He drew heavily on the humanist's Platonism, his contempt for the world, his concept of faith, and his eschatology.[2]

Beza called Erasmus an Arian and Farel continued to denounce him as an impure scoundrel and as the worst and wickedest of mortals.[3] On the other hand, the Swiss Protestant chronicler, John Kessler, who died in 1574, bore this witness: "Whatever is artistic, finished, learned, and wise is called Erasmian, which word now means impeccable and perfect."[4]

Nor were the English Reformers less ready either to learn from or to denounce the great man. William Tyndale borrowed much from him when he translated the New Testament into English, but, nevertheless, spoke slightingly of him as of one "whose tongue maketh of little gnats great elephants and lifteth up above the stars whosoever giveth him a little exhibition."[5]

In the next century John Milton found in Erasmus a

[1] O. Myconius writes Bullinger, June 24, 1535, that Erasmus's *Ecclesiastes* ought not to be printed in any Christian city on account of the allusion to the mass as a sacrifice. *Calvini Opera*, x, b, p. 47. (*Corpus Reformatorum* 38 b.)

[2] See Index to *Calvini Opera*, vol. lix, p. 76. (*Corpus Reformatorum*, lxxxvii, 76.) See also M. Schulze: *Calvins Jenseits-Christentum im Verhältnis zu den religiösen Schriften des Erasmus*. 1902.

[3] Letter of protest from Boniface Amerbach, Jerome Froben, and N. Episcopius to Farel and Beza, dated Basle, September 20, 1557. *Calvini Opera*, xvi, ep. 2728. (*Corpus Reformatorum*, xliv.)

[4] *Johannes Kesslers Sabbata*, hg. von E. Egli und R. Schoch. 1902, p. 87.

[5] A. W. Pollard: *Records of the English Bible*, 1911, p. 96. He borrowed the phrase, "ex musca plusquam elephantem facit," from Erasmus himself; see Allen, ep. 1148, *et saepe*.

support for his doctrine of divorce, and also used his example to excuse his own unreserved treatment of vice.[1]

The Protestant view of Erasmus has been unduly emphasized because most of his biographers have been from this side. Such was the English life by Samuel Knight (1726), and the still more elaborate and thorough one by John Jortin (1758-60). The impression made by the latter on a man of the world is well recorded in one of Horace Walpole's letters:[2]

> For Doctor Jortin's *Erasmus*, which I have very nearly finished, it has given me a good opinion of the author, and he has given me a very bad one of his subject. By the doctor's labors and impartiality, Erasmus appears as a begging parasite, who had parts enough to discover truth, and not courage enough to profess it: whose vanity made him always writing, yet his writings ought to have cured his vanity, as they were the most abject things in the world. Good Erasmus's honest mean was alternate time-serving. I never had thought much about him, and now I heartily despise him.

This judgment is the more impressive in that Jortin writes not, as one might think, to attack his subject, but rather to defend him. But whereas the worldling sees in Erasmus a coward, the dogmatically religious man sees in him only a worldling.

> What a fineness of judgment [says Professor Harnack][3], what a power to look all around, what an earnest morality, does Erasmus develop in his *Diatribe on the Free Will!* One is justified in regarding it as the crown of his literary work; but it is an entirely secular, at bottom an irreligious treatise.

Hear also the opinion of Böhmer:[4]

> As a genuine optimist, Worldly Wiseman, and completely unphilosophical scholar, Erasmus really possessed no organ at all for the perception of religion!

[1] Milton: *Defensio Secunda pro Populo Anglicana*, *Works*, 1806, pp. 229, 285, 299.

[2] To Henry Zouch, October 21, 1758, *Letters of Horace Walpole*, 16 vols. 1903, vol. iii, p. 205.

[3] Adolph Harnack: *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*,[4] iii, p. 841.

[4] H. Böhmer: *Luther im Lichte der neueren Forschung*,[3] 1910, p. 147.

While admitting Erasmus's services to criticism, to history, and to comparative religion,[1] Walter Köhler assigns to the humanist the somewhat difficult rôle of "a John the Baptist and Judas Iscariot in one!"[2]

Nor are these harsh censures confined to German scholars. Nothing more crushing has ever been written than the following words of Principal T. M. Lindsay:[3]

> "A great scholar but a petty-minded man" is a verdict for which there is abundant evidence. . . . Every biographer has admitted that it is hopeless to look for truth in his voluminous correspondence. . . . He was always writing for effect and often for effect of a rather sordid kind. . . . He had the ingenuity of a cuttlefish to conceal himself and his real opinions; and it was commonly used to protect his own skin.

Even the more conservative Protestants, however, are in some places coming to see in Erasmus a support for their double ideal of conformity and clericalism on the one side, and of reasonable liberty of opinion on the other. "The ideals of Erasmus in the spirit of Luther" is the motto proposed by one of them, for, in his opinion, on the five chief points at issue between the two leaders, the verdict is now in favor of the humanist. These moot points are said to concern: (1) the papacy, which Luther thought the work of antichrist, but which Erasmus regarded as salvable; (2) the method of reforming the Church; (3) toleration of opinion; (4) attitude toward dogma; (5) freedom of the will.[4] Other divines of the same school are ready to hail Erasmus as the man who "stepped quietly from the mediæval to the modern world," and even while praising him for his free spirit of inquiry, blame him for some of his most logical deductions, as shown, for example, in his too loose treatment of divorce. Alike his glory and his danger are found in his detached mind, which, "like a detached

[1] W. Köhler: *Idee und Persönlichkeit in der Kirchengeschichte*, 1910, p. 18.
[2] *Die Klassiker der Religion: Erasmus.* Hg. von W. Köhler, 1917, p. 17.
[3] *History of the Reformation*, 1906, i, pp. 172 ff.
[4] H. G. Smith, "The Triumph of Erasmus in Modern Protestantism," *Hibbert Journal*, iii, i, 1905, pp. 64-82.

lady, is an extremely awkward traveling companion and for a monk seemed to verge on the improper."[1]

Not among the conservatives, but among the liberal Christians, did Erasmus fully come to his own. Even in Catholicism there was a little band of his disciples who struggled vainly against desperate odds to find some compromise, some spirit of healing and reform, in his precepts. Such were the devoted German theologians, John Gropper, Julius Pflug, and George Wicel; such were the Italian Catholic Reformers, Victoria Colonna, Renée of Ferrara, Isabella d'Este;[2] and Cardinal Contarini. Their counterparts in the established Protestant Churches were found in Melanchthon and in his disciple Camerarius.[3] With great effect the quondam neighbor of Calvin, Sebastian Castellio, spread forth the words of Erasmus as one principal support for his noble plea for toleration.[4] Still further, in the eighteenth century, went John Solomon Semler, sometimes called "the father of German rationalism," when he declared, "as an unquestionable truth, that everything which the newer theology had painfully won for itself was already to be found in the great and admirable Erasmus."[5]

This liberalizing influence in Christianity has been constant. Especially when, some fifty or sixty years ago, a fierce battle was fought over the inspiration and

[1] J. P. Whitney: "Erasmus," *English Historical Review*, 1920, 1 ff.

[2] In 1537 Cardinal Bembo saw pictures of Luther and Erasmus at Isabella's castle at Mantua; J. Cartwright: *Isabella d'Este*, ii, 378.

[3] *Joachimi Camerarii Bapenbergensis Epistolarum familiarium, libri vi*, 1583. Camerarius to Jerome Baumgartner, July 30, 1538 (1536): "Know that Erasmus of Rotterdam has recently died, having won eternal fame by his life: this news was brought to me by men who have seen his grave, as many have done, so that hereafter the rumors cannot be denied. Though not unexpected, this event brought me some little chagrin, both for other causes and for one special reason so small that I am ashamed to mention it." This last obscure allusion perhaps refers to Melanchthon's plan of visiting Erasmus, thwarted by his death, a visit which Camerarius was anxious to promote.

[4] S. Castellion: *Traité des Hérétiques*, ed. A. Olivet, 1913. R. H. Murray: *Erasmus and Luther*, 1920, p. 205.

[5] E. Troeltsch: *Protestantism and Progress*, 1912, p. 201.

inerrancy of the Bible, the name of Erasmus was invoked in the rational side; for, according to J. S. Brewer:[1]

> he claimed to apply to the authorized translation of the Scripture the same rules of criticism as the scholars of his day were applying to Cicero and to Vergil. In this respect his influence on the Reformation was greater than Luther's; as the application of the principles of criticism introduced by Erasmus must, under favorable circumstances and in more vigorous hands, lead to consequences more important.

Andrew D. White, the distinguished American scholar and diplomat, and first president of Cornell University, felt so strongly that the services of Erasmus's biblical criticism to the cause of enlightenment had been inadequately appreciated, that at one time he intended to utilize the large collection of Erasmiana made by him and now left to Cornell, in writing a biography of the humanist.[2] Another eminent American scholar, Professor George Burton Adams, has expressed a similar opinion in the following words:[3]

> By no means the least of the great services of Erasmus to civilization had been to hold up before all the world so conspicuous an example of the scholar following, as his inalienable right, the truth as he found it, wherever it appeared to lead him, and honest in his public utterances to the result of his studies.

The same testimony to the enlightening effect of his work is offered by Mark Pattison,[4] who thinks that his Greek Testament "contributed more to the liberation of the human mind from the thraldom of the clergy than all the uproar and rage of Luther's many pamphlets." Erasmus "was a true rationalist in principle," for he was the earliest and most complete exemplar of the rule "that reason is the only one guide of life, the supreme arbiter of all questions, politics and religion included." If he did not "dogmatically denounce the rights of reason," yet "he practically exerted them."

[1] J. S. Brewer: "Passages from the Life of Erasmus" (1863), *English Studies*, 1881, p. 346.

[2] See his *Autobiography*, 1895, index.

[3] *Civilization during the Middle Ages*, 1900, pp. 423 f.

[4] "Erasmus," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in the ninth edition and, revised by P. S. Allen, in the eleventh, 1911.

A similarly high estimate of the humanist's services to Christian enlightenment is set forth by Marcus Dods, who finds the portrait of Erasmus attractive, in that the intelligent eyes, the melancholy and skeptical mouth, and the ironical smile exhibit, in one of the world's great faces, scholarly tastes combined with pungent wit. His main fault consisted in too great optimism in fancying that abuses would ever be removed by those whose interest it was to maintain them.[1]

A large school now sees in the Reformation a reaction. Another school, believing that the Reformation was a step forward, sees in the counter-movement in the Catholic Church a great restoration of mediævalism. From these premises a rather erratic scholar has sought to give a novel interpretation of the work of Erasmus as "a Counter-Reformer before the Counter-Reformation." His piety, in the opinion of Hermelink, arose from the same source as did that of the Brethern of the Common Life, and finally flowed into the streams of Tridentine and Jesuitical reform. "The immediate effect of the mediæval reform movement was, therefore, the strengthening of the Counter-Reformation."[2]

Fully as much as in the orthodox, or established, Churches, did the Erasmian thought work itself out to expression among the sectaries and independents. Little as there seems to be, at first blush, in common between his aristocratic, highly cultured, almost artificially polished and decorously conforming mind, and that of the plebeian, poor, dissenting, popular Anabaptists, nevertheless they found common ground in their emphasis of the Sermon on the Mount, in their neglect of ritual, and in the tolerance and passive non-resistance characteristic of many, though not of all, of them.[3]

[1] M. Dods: *Erasmus and other Essays.* 1891.

[2] Hermelink: "Die Anfänge des Humanismus in Tübingen," *Württembergische Vierteljahrshefte für Landesgeschichte,* N. F. xv, 1906, pp. 319 ff.

[3] P. Althaus: *Zur Charakteristik der Evangelischen Gebetsliteratur im Reformationsjahrhundert,* 1914, pp. 26 f.

The "spiritual Reformer," Sebastian Franck, a combination of mystic and rationalist, was strongly influenced, in some particulars, by the Dutchman. When, in 1531, he published his "Chronicle, Time-book, and History-Bible," he stated that heretic was a name of honor, borne by the leaders of thought in every generation, and that Erasmus deserved that title. The humanist, however, did not appreciate the intended compliment, but bitterly resented it.[1]

The peculiar character of the Reformation in the Netherlands, neither Lutheran nor Zwinglian, but humanistic, moral, and averse from revolution, may be traced to Erasmus. On his own circle of friends, Cornelius Grapheus,[2] Nicholas Buscoducensis,[3] Haio Caminga,[4] William Gnapheus,[5] and many another, Erasmus naturally impressed his ideas and character. On the next generation his influence was even stronger, particularly on the moderate party known as the Compromisers, and on "those humanists after the downfall of humanism" the Libertines, whose name then imported devotion to liberty, not, as it now does, to immoral licence.[6] Indeed, this meaning of the word, derived "a libertate carnis," was first fastened on it by Calvin, who wrote against "the fantastic and furious sect" in 1545. Originally they were a quietist and

[1] Oncken on S. Franck, in *Historische Zeitschrift*, Band 82, pp. 385 ff.

[2] The author of a *Vita S. Nicolai*, who later fell foul of the Inquisition: see Allen, iii, 34 note.

[3] Probably the author of a pseudonymous work, *Manipulus florum collectus ex libris R. P. F. Jacobi de Hochstraten*, by Nicholas Quadus, Saxo, no date, a satire on Hochstraten, Pfefferkorn, Lee and Gratius. On this see *Bibliotheca Belgica*, s. v. "Manipulus," Z. W., viii, 401-420, and Allen, iii, p. 34, note.

[4] A *famulus* to whom Erasmus gave Seneca's Works, 1529; with the inscription, "Haioni Camigae Phrysio amico Des. Erasmus Rot. dono dedit, 3 id. Jan. 1529"—*i.e.*, January 13th. See M. L. Polain in *Mélanges offerts à M. É. Picot*, 1913, ii, 135.

[5] Author of *Troost ende Spiegel der siecken*, 1531, ed. by F. Pijper in *Bibliotheca Reformatoria neerlandica*, i, 151-249.

[6] F. Pijper: *Erasmus en de Nederlandische Reformatie*, 1907. H. A. Enno van Gelder: "Humanisten en Libertijnen, Erasmus en C. P. Hooft," *Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, N. S. xvi, 1920, pp. 35-84.

spiritual body, and as they were founded in the Netherlands in 1530 by one Coppin, they may have owed something to the direct and personal influence of Erasmus.[1] He was also the spiritual ancestor of James Acontius, the most radical Christian of the sixteenth century, who regarded positive dogmas as "Stratagems of Satan" to entangle the simply pious soul.[2] In the Netherlands C. P. Hooft, George Cassander, Francis Balduinus, Johannes Venator, and Dirck Volckertszoon Coornheert, exerted themselves, during the frightful ravages of the Dutch War of Independence, to impress upon their countrymen a spirit of tolerance, an indifference to ceremonies, and an anti-dogmatism directed especially against Calvin's doctrine of predestination. Though William of Orange found in this party a useful ally, and gave it his support, their efforts remained partly thwarted until Arminius and Episcopius gave their ideas a more powerful, but also a more narrowly pointed, expression.[3] A truer, because a freer, disciple than Arminius was Hugo Grotius, who thought that "Erasmus had so well shown the road to a reasonable Reformation." Adopting his description of Christianity in terms of the Sermon on the Mount, his pacifism, his suggestion of a world court of arbitration, Grotius wished to reconcile Catholics and Protestants and, though nominally one of the latter, was in many respects more in sympathy with the ideals of the old Church.[4]

The Christian radicals have always found in Erasmus an inspiration and a support. The Unitarian Charles Beard wrote in 1883, "The Reformation of the past was

[1] Karl Müller: "Calvin und die Libertiner," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, xl, 1922, pp. 83-129.

[2] W. Köhler: "Geistesahnen des J. Acontius," *Festgabe für K. Müller*, 1922, 198 ff.

[3] Rachfahl: *Wilhelm von Oranien*, i, 1906, pp. 448 f, 464; Preserved Smith: *The Age of the Reformation*, 1920, 239 ff, 249 ff. W. Köhler: "Coornheert" in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 1913; W. Dilthey: *Das natürliche System der Geisteswissenschaften im 17 Jahrhundert*, 1892, pp. 480 ff.

[4] J. L. Motley: *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, 1855, i, 72. J. Schlüter: *Die Theologie des H. Grotius*, 1919.

Luther's; perhaps the Reformation of the future will return to Erasmus."[1] Schlottmann, a "Bible-Christian" who hoped both to reform and to unite all Churches, appealed to Erasmus as a liberal force against the Roman Curia after the triumph of ultra-montanism and mediævalism at the Vatican Council of 1871. He called his book *Erasmus Redivivus sive de Curia Romana hucusque insanabili*,[2] and he wrote it in Latin because he wished to describe "not the life, but the image of Erasmus defaced by the opinions and passions of divers parties," and he thought that could only be done in the tongue used by the humanist himself. He found that "Erasmus favored Luther because of the gospel and attacked him because of the fatal schism which was to endure for centuries," and that the purpose of the two was the same, but their methods different.

The most thorough-going partisan of the humanist is a man who has little of his spirit of moderation, a man who derives his principles from the skeptics and his facts about the Reformation from the Catholics,[3] a free-thinker who laments the lost unity of Christendom. To present the ideas of so enigmatical a thinker one must quote directly from his work:[4]

> The Catholic Church needed reform urgently enough, but the reform which it needed was that of Erasmus, not of Luther. Had the labors of Erasmus not been blighted by the passionate appeals of Wittenberg, at first to the ignorance of the masses and then to the greed of the princes, we believe that the Catholic Church might have developed with the intellectual development of mankind, might possibly have become the universal instrument of moral progress and mental culture, and—dogmas gradually slipping into forgetfulness—we should now be enjoying the blessings of a universal Church, embracing all that is best in the intellect of our own time.

[1] *The Reformation in its Relations to Modern Thought and Knowledge*, 1883. Principal J. Estlin Carpenter of Manchester College, Oxford, a personal friend of Beard's, informed me that that scholar found Erasmus much more congenial to him than was Luther.

[2] Two volumes, 1883-89.

[3] Karl Pearson: *The Ethic of Freethought*, 1887. 2d ed. 1901. He writes much on the Reformation, all of it indebted deeply to the Catholic Janssen.

[4] *Op. cit.*, 2d ed., pp. 199, 205.

> We have to inquire whether our modern thought has not been the outcome of a gradual return to the principles of Erasmus, a continuous rejection one by one of every doctrine and every conception of Luther.

A far more mature and brilliant interpretation of the forces at work in the Reformation has been given by Ernst Troeltsch, who sees in Erasmus the exponent of reason in religion, and of the idea of reducing Christianity to a general cult of humanity.[1] Wernle[2] and Karl Müller also see in Erasmus the standard-bearer of a fundamentally new and reforming concept of Christianity, a truly modern religion. Indeed, Müller so far reads into Erasmus the ideas now agitating German theology, that he credits him with finding that harmony between Jesus and Paul so acutely wanted by some advanced thinkers.[3] A. Schröder has written a small book[4] on the modern traits in Erasmus. These he finds in his seductive doubts, his relativist point-of-view, and his idea of religious progress and religious breadth. Furthermore,

> Erasmus was modern . . . in that he knew how to respect acts and facts, but was no man of action himself. . . . He was modern in seeking and not quite finding, . . . as a skeptic and rationalist, . . . as a man of intellect rather than of religion.

To the left of the Christian progressives stand the "dissenters from all creeds." Some of them have seen in Erasmus but another theologian. While Rabelais acknowledged his debt to the humanist in the warmest terms, and while Montaigne[5] spoke favorably of him, Bonaventure des Périers mocked him along with Luther, Calvin, and all the obscurantists.[6]

[1] E. Troeltsch: *Kultur der Gegenwart, Geschichte der Christlichen Religion*, 1909, pp. 478 ff.

[2] *Renaissance des Christentums im 16. Jahrhundert*, p. 25.

[3] *Christentum und Kirche Westeuropas im Mittelalter* (*Kultur der Gegenwart*), I, Teil iv, p. 215.

[4] *Der moderne Mensch in Erasmus*, 1919.

[5] *Essais*, iii, 2; and his whole spirit was like Erasmus's.

[6] *Cymbalum Mundi*, 1538; and on this *Zwingliana*, 1922, no. 1.

But other rationalists have now and then found much to their taste in Erasmus, whose own skepticism they have been inclined to overrate. It is impossible to agree with Amiel[1] that Erasmus was all but a free-thinker, an earlier Voltaire or Littré, or with Froude that "in his love of pleasure, in his habits of thought, in his sarcastic skepticism, you see the healthy, well-disposed, clever, tolerant, epicurean, intellectual man of the world," and that, if his spirit had prevailed, the higher classes would have become mere skeptics and the multitude have remained sunk in superstition.[2]

But we do find that the ground irrigated by his spirit bloomed with a freedom of thought not found elsewhere. Paul Jovius spoke of him as surpassing almost all the writers of his age in the fertility of his genius, though he added, with somewhat forced assumption of virtue, that so pleasant and stinging a satire as the *Folly* was hardly becoming to the pen of a theologian.[3] The wide swing of Elizabethan skepticism has been noted, and its leaders were trained in the *Colloquies*. Their mark, indeed, may be found on many of the contemporaries of Shakespeare.[4] Of all the Elizabethans learned Ben Jonson owed the most to him. The characters and situations in two of his famous comedies, *Volpone* and *The Alchemist*, took not a little from the *Colloquies*.[5]

So often has Erasmus been compared to Voltaire that it may seem odd that the French philosophers of the Enlightenment saw so little in him. The father of them

[1] E. Amiel: *Un Libre-penseur du XVIe siècle, Érasme.* 1889, p. xi.

[2] J. A. Froude: "Times of Erasmus and Luther" (1867), *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, 1908, i, pp. 69, 131. Also *Life of Erasmus*, 1894.

[3] Paulus Jovius: *Elogia virorum literis illustrium, Opera*, 1575, i, 175.

[4] On Elizabethan skepticism, P. Smith: *Age of the Reformation*, 1920, p. 633 ff. On Erasmus's influence on Lily and on some other literature of Shakespeare's age, see H. de Vocht: *De Invloed van Erasmus op de Engelsche Tooneelliteratuur der XVe en XVIIe Eeuwen.* 1908. Also "Erasmus," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, ix, 732c.

[5] See J. D. Rea's preface to his edition of *Volpone*, 1919. I think Rea overestimates Erasmus's influence on *The Alchemist*, but that he proves *Volpone* to be largely dependent on Erasmus as well as on Lucian.

all, Peter Bayle, while furnishing a brief sketch of his life and character, says not a word of his rationalism or influence.[1] Voltaire, in his great *Essay on the Character and Genius of Nations*,[2] says only: "Erasmus, although long time a monk, or perhaps rather because long time a monk, doused the monks with ridicule from which they never recovered." An anonymous writer, probably Diderot, in the *Encyclopédie*, however, calls him "the finest wit and most universal scholar of his age," and says also: "He was one of the first to treat theological matters in a noble manner, free from vain subtleties."[3]

On the Enlightenment in Scandinavia, also, he had some influence.[4]

Continuing in the same tradition, Sainte-Beuve calls Erasmus a moderate Voltaire, a Fontenelle with a saner literary taste, a Rabelais without drunkenness, a born neutral with good sense and finely tempered spirit.[5]

Kuno Francke emphasizes the eighteenth-century-like rationalism and optimism of Erasmus, and adds: "Almost all the liberating ideas on which the international culture of the present rests are present in germ in his thought-world."[6]

A penetrating analysis of the Dutch scholar's genius is offered by Imbart de la Tour. After doing justice to the historical-minded philosopher who saw in classic antiquity, in Judaism, and in Christianity forms of thought necessary in their own place to complete one another, he goes on:

[1] Pierre Bayle: *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, 1696, *s. v.* "Erasme."

[2] Voltaire: *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*, 1754, chap. 127.

[3] *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire universel raisonné*, tome xvi, 1772, *s. v.* "Érasme."

[4] V. Andersen: *Tider og Typer*, 2 v., 1907-9. Holberg paid a debt to humanism in his "Erasmus Montanus," and there was a *Praise of Lying* written in imitation of the *Praise of Folly*. See *An Icelandic Satire* (*Lof Lyginnar*) by Porleifur Halldorsson, ed. H. Hermannsson, 1915.

[5] *Causeries du Lundi*, 1857, i, p. 240.

[6] "Erasmus als Denker und Kunstler," *Internationale Monatsschrift*, vi, 1911-12, pp. 269-291.

> One will look in vain in his work for that which was the power of Luther and of Calvin: those simple ideas, radiating sonorous phrases, thrown out like a fanfare to the winds of heaven . . . Erasmus proposed more than he demonstrated. . . . Every system repelled him like a jail. . . . Moreover, this genius lacked a soul. He never vibrates or throws himself or anyone else into a passion; he suffers only in his vanity. . . . Compare his Christianity, more intellectual than mystical, with the richness of soul and of accent found in Luther! . . . But in the end he might have thought he conquered. His spirit continued, especially in France . . . the country in which Erasmianism was best understood and in which it bore its finest fruits.[1]

This influence is said to have been shown in the Erasmian thought dominating the early pre-Lutheran reform, and in the *Politiques*, who learned tolerance from the *Colloquies*. Cartesianism in the seventeenth century might be counted his child; and modern times owe much to his exegesis and to his ideals of progress.

This symposium on Erasmus's influence and character may well include one of the best of all the estimates, by one of the greatest of American historians, Henry Charles Lea, who writes:[2]

> Erasmus, the sickly scholar of Rotterdam, the flatterer of popes and princes, the vainglorious boaster and querulous grumbler when his assaults were retaliated in kind, is, when rightly considered, one of the most heroic figures of an age of heroes. Nowhere else can we find an instance so marked of the power of pure intellect. His gift of ridicule was the most dreaded weapon in Europe and he used it mercilessly upon the most profitable abuses of the Church.

As most of Erasmus's writings were devoted to religion it is natural that most of the estimates should judge him by his relation to religion. But piety was not his only interest, and he appeals to many readers as a scholar and writer rather than as a philosopher or theologian. Ever after the Ciceronian storm had subsided there were eminent thinkers who criticized his scholarship. The

[1] P. Imhart de la Tour: *Origines de la Réforme*, iii, 1914, pp. 107 ff. The same appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, May 15, 1913.

[2] *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain*, 1890, p. 30.

younger Scaliger saw many faults of Latin in his works, and Giordano Bruno went much further in denouncing[1] "a certain prince of humanist who wrote on a supply of words[2] such unnecessary things that he certainly seems to have written folly naturally,"[3] and in blaming[4] him for "that present flood of arrogant and presumptuous grammarians, who by the multiplication of books and commentaries had led knowledge into extreme confusion and crushed it like the invincible Cæneus under the rocks and trees heaped on him by the half-animal Centaurs."

But against this disparaging estimate countless tributes could be marshaled did space permit. The greatest of living classical scholars[5] confesses that he is captivated by Erasmus's books whenever he opens one of them. A tremendously high appreciation of his literary genius closes Charles Reade's great novel, *The Cloister and the Hearth*,[6] of which so many scenes are taken from the writings of the humanist. He was not only, says Reade,

> the first scholar and divine of his epoch; he was also the heaven-born dramatist of his generation. . . . Words of a genius so high as his are not born to die: their immediate effect upon mankind fulfilled, they may seem to lie torpid; but at each fresh shower of intelligence Time pours upon their students, they prove their immortal race; they revive, they spring from the dust of great libraries; they bud, they flower, they fruit, they seed, from generation to generation and from age to age.

No evaluation of Erasmus's genius would be complete without taking account of the opinion of the master of them who know him, the scholar whose edition of the humanist's epistles is one of the glories of twentieth-century learning. When Dr. P. S. Allen asks himself

[1] J. Bruni *Opera latine conscripta*, ii, part iii, p. 376.
[2] *I.e.* the *De Copia Verborum*.
[3] "Pro more," a pun on the *Moria*, or *Folly*.
[4] *De triplici minimo et mensura*, quoted by V. Spampanato: *Vita di Giordano Bruno*, i, 1921, p. 74.
[5] U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff: *Geschichte der Philologie*, 1921, p. 19.
[6] Published 1861.

what was the secret of Erasmus's remarkable ascendancy, he replies:[1]

> It may be found in a combination of brilliant intellectual gifts with absolute sincerity and enduring purpose. As a thinker he was not perhaps profound. . . . His strength lay rather in the power to grasp important truths and to present them with cogency in spontaneous, irresistible eloquence; never succumbing to the temptations which beset many brilliant minds, to pursue novelty and paradox at the cost of making the better appear the worse, and, for fear of cant, to bespatter in their mirth the high things they really venerate.

Dr. Allen's words are welcome not only for their insight but for their evidence of the wish to judge the man by his best achievement. But, though we should not be partisans—poor Erasmians if we were!—we must, in closing, speak once more of his moral ideals and of the part he played in the great battle of his age.

The man to whom all Europe turned at the crisis of religious conflict as to an umpire and whom zealots then reviled because he would not prostitute his judicial office to their petty ends, can be neither accepted by us as having spoken the final word on the Reformation, nor reproached for not anticipating the verdict that we ourselves may give. In the light of four centuries we have little excuse for not rendering a fairer judgment and for not taking a wider view than even he, in the thick of the conflict, was able to do. Convinced as I am that the Reformation was fundamentally a progressive movement, the culmination of the Renaissance, and above all the logical outcome of the teachings of Erasmus himself, I cannot but regard his later rejection of it as a mistake in itself and as a misfortune to the cause of liberalism. But, for his decision to keep "au-dessus de la mêlée," I cannot petulantly find fault with him. The world is too big a stage, human motives and aspirations are too complex, to allow the historian to choose one

[1] P. S. Allen: *Erasmus. A lecture delivered for the Genootschap Nederland-Engeland &c.*, 1922, p. 15.

man or one cause as eternally right and so condemn all others as wrong. The drama would be poorer were there less variety of character; among its *dramatis personæ* it needs diverse types: Luther and Loyola, Erasmus, and Valla, and Rabelais.

And it is futile to judge him by one issue forced upon him late in life and against his will. How, with his personality, could he have acted otherwise than as he did? Physically a small man, thin, slight, and pale;[1] everything about his form and chiseled features indicated delicacy, refinement, exquisite temper. If Luther was a Richard Cœur de Lion whose sword could cleave a bar of iron, Erasmus was a Saladin, whose blade could sever a pillow without knocking it down. His tastes were fastidious and shrinking, as if—one may repeat the epigram once more—he had been descended from a long line of maiden aunts. His eyelids, veiling his eyes demurely, do not keep him from keen vision, but only from fierce glances; his mouth is curved in kindly irony, which is perhaps the ripest of all moods in which poor humanity can look at itself.

Purely intellectual as he was, he could not be a partisan, not because of timidity, but because he saw the good and the bad of all sides. He would not follow Luther, because he had mixed some evil with his good; he could not wish him utterly crushed, because of the Pharisees in the Catholic Church. He was always making exceptions, discovering distinctions, and toning down an otherwise too glaring statement. He could hardly write anything without some hedging, some slight doubt as to the unqualified validity of what he said. He, almost alone in his age, knew that truth had many facets, that no rule can be without exceptions, and that no position is unassailable.

If his life did not furnish another example of supreme self-sacrifice and heroism, still less did it have in it anything vulgar, or angry, or ugly. As I compare his por-

[1] Allen, iv, 169. Letter of Lee. See also his portraits.

trait with that of Sir Thomas More, I find that More's face is the one on which I love to look for occasional inspiration, but Erasmus's is the face of the man I should prefer to live with. More would die for his faith, and would have you punished for yours; Erasmus would be companionable and chatty and courteous and tolerant even to an infidel. What anecdotes the man could tell, what pictures he could call up, what wit he could scintillate! And, above all, how much one might have learned from him, both in matters of mere erudition and in the conduct of life!

As the broadest scholar and as the most polished wit of his generation Erasmus is sure of a lasting place in the history of literature and of learning. As that actor in the great contemporary revolution who typified the contact of Renaissance and Reformation, who felt most deeply their common spirit and most delicately their various contrasts, his biography is worthy of close study. Most of all does he deserve to be remembered for the rare spirit which combined the ethical and the rational; for the common sense really so uncommon, and for the humanity so called, one might think, like "lucus a non lucendo," from its conspicuous absence in many human breasts. That he saw through the accretions of superstition, dogma, and ritual to the "philosophy of Christ"; that he let his mind play freely on the sacred arcana of the traditional faith; that he recognized reason as the final arbiter in these matters as well as in social and political affairs—all this is the noble genius of Erasmus.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE YEAR OF ERASMUS'S BIRTH

THE data for calculating the birth year of Erasmus can be found partly in the sayings of his friends, inscriptions, and allusions, but most reliably in his own writings. It is remarkable that his statements differ widely. A number of indirect statements point to the year 1469 or even later. Thus he says several times that he was fourteen years old when he left Deventer (LB. i, 921 f; viii, 561; Allen, ep. 940), which happened in 1484. Again, he says he was twelve years old when he saw Agricola, probably in 1484. He tells us that when he met Colet, in the autumn of 1499, they were both just thirty years old (Allen, ep. 1211). He says he wrote a letter to his guardian at the age of fourteen; if this is the letter printed by Allen, ep. 1, as in 1484, he must have been born in 1469, which is the year that all the other data just given indicate, save the saying about Agricola, which would point to a later year.

Most of his direct statements of his age, however, point to an earlier year. The list drawn up by Doctor Richter, revised by Mr. Nichols (i. 474 ff) is here given again revised and expanded by myself. First I give the source and afterward, in parentheses, the year to which the statement points:

1. *Carmen de senectutis incommodis*, August, 1506. LB. iv, 756a. (1466.)
2. *Methodus verae theologiae*, March, 1516. (1466 or 1467.)
3. Epistle to Rhegius, February 24, 1516. Allen, ep. 392. (1467.)
4. Epistle to Budé, February 15, 1517. Allen, ii, p. 469. (1466.)
5. Epistle to Capito, February 26, 1517. Allen, ep. 541. (1466.)
6. *Apologia ad Fabrum*, August 5, 1517. LB. x, 20. (1466.)

7. Epistle to Stromer, August 24, 1517. Allen, ep. 631. (1467 or before.)
8. Epistle to Eck, May 15, 1518. Allen, ep. 844. (1466 or 1467.)
9. Preface to *Methodus*, 2d ed., 1518. LB. v, 79. (1466.)
10. Epistle to Rhenanus, October, 1518. Allen, ep. 867. (1467 or before.)
11. Epistle to Ambrose Leo, October 15, 1518. Allen, ep. 868. (1465 or 1466.)
12. Epistle to Theodorici, April 17, 1519. Allen, ep. 940. (1466.)
13. Epistle to Gaverus, March 1, 1524. Lond. xxiii, 5; LB. iii, 787D. (1465 or 1466.)
14. *Compendium Vitæ*, March 2, 1524. Allen, i, 47. (1466.)
15. Epistle to Stromer, December 10, 1524. Lond. xix, 4; LB. iii, 833F. (1465 or 1466.)
16. Epistle to Budé, August 25, 1525. Lond. xix, 89; LB. iii, 885C. (1464 or earlier.)
17. Epistle to Nicholas Hispanus, April 29, 1526. Lond. xxi, 24; LB. iii, 932C. (1465 or earlier.)
18. Epistle to Baptista Egnatius, May 6, 1526. Lond. xxi, 39; LB. iii, 935E. (1465 or earlier.)
19. Epistle to Gratianus Hispanus, March 15, 1526. Lond. xix, 54; LB. iii, 1067B. (1464.)
20. Epistle to Binck, September 4, 1531. Lond. xxv, 2, col. 1331. (1461 or later.)
21. To Peter and Christopher Mesia, December 24, 1533. Lond. xxvii, 22. col. 1530DE. (1464 or soon after.)
22. Epistle to Amerbach, June, 1534. *Epistolæ familiares D. Erasmi ad Bon. Amerbachium*, 1779, ep. 90. (1464.)
23. Epistle to Decius, August 22, 1534. Miaskowski, *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, xv, p. 333. (1464.)

Combining these data, we see that five indirect references to events early in Erasmus's life point to 1469 as the year of birth, and one to 1472, or possibly an earlier year. Of the direct references, the first fifteen, falling between the year 1506 and 1524, point mostly to 1466, but some to 1465 or to 1467. All can be made to agree with 1466 except one which gives 1467. But, of the last eight references, falling between the years 1525 and 1534, all point to the year 1464 or can be made to agree with it. It therefore seems that Erasmus tended to put the year of his birth farther back the older he became. For a solution of the enigma see *ante*, pp. 7 f.

APPENDIX II

UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE OF ERASMUS AND JEAN DE PINS

THE letters here published are taken from the manuscript letter-book of Jean de Pins, at the Bibliothèque Municipale at Nîmes, no. 215 (old number 13,864). At least ten years ago my friend, Prof. John Lawrence Gerig, of Columbia University, called my attention to them and now, thanks to the kindness of the Librarian at Nîmes, M. Joseph de Loye, I am enabled to publish them.

Jean de Pins (1470?-1537) of Toulouse, studied at Paris and in Italy. During a five-year stay at Bologna he met Erasmus and Bombasius. The correspondence between himself and Erasmus did not start, however, until many years later, when the Dutch humanist wanted to get a manuscript of Josephus. He first wrote to George d'Armagnac, Bishop of Rodez, who, he had heard, possessed a valuable codex of this author. This letter, dated 19 November, 1531, is extant and published Lond. xxv, 3; LB. 1203, with the mistaken superscription "Episcopo Rivensi" instead of "Ruthenensi." D'Armagnac wrote Erasmus that De Pins had the codex of Josephus, and the following letters are concerned chiefly about that, though also about other things, particularly the fate of Bombasius and the difficulties that Erasmus's first letter prepared for De Pins at the hands of the enraged heresy-hunters. Though appointed in 1523 Bishop of Rieux, De Pins continued to reside at Toulouse. On him see Allen, iii, p. 510 f; R. C. Christie, *Dolet*, 1880, pp. 57-67; *Revue des Bibliothèques*, xv, 1905, pp. 203-208.

I. Erasmus to De Pins.

Nîmes MS. no. 215, fol. 168 verso. FREIBURG, *March 20, 1532.*

Erasmus Roterodamus clarissimo viro D. D. Joanni Pino episcopo Rivensi in Gallia s.p.

Mihi quidem non infelix error qui dulcissimae societatis quae Bononiae quondam in optimis studiis fuit memoriam refricuit. Persuasum erat nobis Josephum graecum esse apud reverendissimum dominum episcopum Ruthenensem. Is scripsit eum esse in tuis bonis atque ad te postliminio rediisse. Optimam itaque spem mihi facit tua humanitas olim cominus perspecta explorataque fore ut ejus voluminis copiam ad menses aliquot facias Hieronymo Frobenio qui adhibitis aliquot eruditis viris Historicum cumprimis clarum sed interpretum ac scribarum inscitia misere depravatum contaminatumque ex fide graeci codicis restituere decrevit. Ea res ut non parum conducet publicis studiis ita nonnihil laudis apponet tuo quoque nomini. Hieronymus vir est exploratae fidei, attamen si quid addubitas me sponsorem accipe, nihil enim hic metuo.

Illud oraculi παραδοτῆ cupio scire quid agat noster Bombasius; multis enim annis nihil de illo licuit inaudire. Proximis literis significavit se petere Bononiam cum suo cardinali[1] qui nuper decessit numeraturum tria ducatorum millia pro Praetorio quod fuerat mercatus. Preaterea si quid est omnino in quo amplitudini tuae hic humilis olim amiculus, nunc servulus, gratum facere potest, experieris ad omnia imperata promptissimum. Bene vale. Datum Friburgi Brisgoae, 20 die Martii, anno 1532. Erasmus Roterodamus mea manu extempore.

II. De Pins to Erasmus.

Nîmes MS. no. 215. fol. 165 verso. TOULOUSE, *1532.*

Johannes Pinus Erasmo Roterodamo salutem.

Redditae sunt mihi jucundissimae et optatissimae literae tuae, Erasme mi suavissime, quae difficile credas quantam primo suo adventu tragediam excitarint, quod in quorundam hominum manus inciderant, qui tibi non satis aeque videantur, et apud quos tu quoque male admodum audias. Libuit clanculum odorari, si quid alicunde causae aut comminisci aut elicere possem. Sed ego nihil aliud in causa esse existimo quam quod illi viri alioquin boni quorundam hominum nota sunt addicti vehementiusque quos tu passim in tuis libris offenderis, at vel laceraris potius et vexaris immanius ut ipsi et apud me, et apud alios, saepe sunt questi. Hi quod se magni

[1] Cardinal Lorenzo Pucci, who died c. September 16, 1531. Bombasius, however, had perished at the sack of Rome, on May 6, 1527.

aliquid in his inventuros sperarant quasi vero inter Erasmum et Pinum per literas nihil nisi de regno aut regni conjuratione agi deberet, primo tumultum ingentem moverant et me inscio atque etiam absente, nam tum forte ab urbe paulisper rusticatum abieram, librariolos quosdam qui eas literas Parisiis attulerant, in carcerem conjecerint, quoniam hi et tergiversari nonnihil, et neque satis propere eas literas eorum manibus reddere viderentur. Verum illico illi, qui primum quodam veluti furore perciti videbantur ad sanitatem atque ad modestiam redierunt, literasque non nisi me praesente aut assentiente resignare voluerunt. Quod cum his facile annuissem hique in literis nihil nisi de Josepho quodam scriptum reperiissent, tum vero illis et labra concidisse crederes et plane cornicum oculos confixos esse. Ipse vero interim mecum coepi ridere fabulam quam neque tibi ipsi ignotam esse volui, ut si tu quo pacto potes aut si id forsan quidquid est tanti totum existimas, id genus hominum tibi resarcias gratiam, nisi eam forte adeo concisam putas ut difficile posthac coituram ac cicatricem inde abducturam existimes. Scis quo innuam eoque apertius nihil loquor.

Jamque ad tuas literas quibus quod apud me Forbonii [sic] tui causam agis de Josepho cogor et ipse altius repetere quo tibi res tota innotescat: Proximis annis Petro Gyllio[1] viro eruditissimo episcopi Ruthenensis homini nobis multis de causis amicissimo familiari ac domestico Josephum meum utendum dederam, qui postea quam bona fide ad dominum postliminio rediisset. Coepi ego multorum literis ac precibus fatigari ut eundem Lugdunum formis excudendum mitterem quod etsi et grave admodum mihi ac permolestum esset, quoniam eo libro aegre admodum carerem quem et redemeram magni olim Venetiis et duorum doctissimorum sae culi nostri hominum Philelphi[2] ac deinceps Leonardi Justiniani Veneti[3] fuisse rescieram, proinque eum mihi castigatissimum esse persuaseram; vicerat tamen amicorum assidua quaedam et indefessa sedulitas, meque vel invitum in ea re herbam porrigere coegerat, jamque a me librum abstulerant. Quum ecce Rutenensis episcopi literae ad me quibus tuae quoque ad ipsum inclusae erant, quibus a me petebat sed tam obnixe ut nihil fieri vehementius potest ut tibi ad aliquot menses libri ejus copiam ac potestatem facerem. Ego vero ubi primum Erasmi mei amicorum vetustissimi, ac jam quoque literarum facile principis mentionem audivi, exilui sane gaudio sed quod paulo post subito merore mutatum est nam quid facerem aliud cum me nec tibi nec Ruthenensi

[1] P. Gylli (1490-1555) was prior of Durenque. On him see Thuasne in *Revue des Bibliothèques*, xv, 1905, pp. 203 ff.

[2] Francesco Filelfo (1398-1481), one of the great humanists of the Italian Renaissance.

[3] Leonardo Giustiniani (1388-1446), a Venetian senator, translator, and author. His version of Plutarch's Lives of Cinna and Lucullus shows that he knew Greek.

nostro gratificari posse conspicerem. Jam liber dominium nostrum exierat nec revocandi spes ulla reliqua facta videbatur. Juvit nos tamen Deus optimus maximus ac negotium ipsum repente in melius vertit, nam denuo mihi praeter spem libri potestas facta est. Noli quaerere quanam id ratione sit factum, nam si dicere coepero, et audienti tibi et mihi ipsi quoque dicenti fastidium pariam. Misi itaque librum confestim ad Rutenensem nostrum nam et is forte sub id tempus in urbem advenerat Armoniacam Aquitaniae Provinciam petiturus in qua summum pro rege Navarrae magistratum gerit qui se fideliter curaturum est pollicitus ut ad te liber sanus et integer perveniat. Proin tu si ita videbitur hominem literis tuis appella, quanquam id minime omnium necessarium existimem. Scio enim eum pro ingenita sua bonitate fidem praestaturum quam dederit.

Venio jam ad extremam epistolae tuae particulam qua petis a me ut si de Bombasio, communi nostro amico, certi quicquam habeam velim te certiorem facere. Ego vero iam plusculos annos de eo nihil audivi, nisi quod fatali illa Romanae urbis direptione periisse hominem rumor quidam (utinam falsus) vulgeraverat. Quo etiam excidio Petrum Alcyonium[1] venetum interfectum narrabant, neque huc posthac de his certius quicquam allatum est. Quare cepi non parvam ex epistola tua consolationem quod scribis a Bombasio literas accepisse, quibus se Bononiam petere nuntiabat. Subduc, amabo, rationem temporis ut scire possim id ante an post excidium fuerit. Quod si post acceperis et vanum fuisse rumorem intelligam et hominem nobis amicissimum vivere adhuc et salvum esse sperare nobis licebit. Qua una re nihil in vita nobis jucundius aut gratius contingere posset.

Vale, Erasme carissime, et me, ut facis, ama.

III. Erasmus to De Pins.

Nîmes MS. 215, fol. 170. FREIBURG, *Jan. 30, 1533.*

Reverendissimo domino Joanni Pino episcopo Rivensi, Erasmus Roterodamus.

Risi tragicos tumultus istorum sed exitu comico etc.[2] Josephus iam est in manibus Hieronymi Frobenii quo nomine plurimam habeo gratiam tuae mihi iam olim cognitae humanitati. Curabo ut codex incorruptus ad te redeat nam Frobenius nondum decrevit exemplar graecum excudere sed ad hujus collationem latinam emendare translationem. Is vero sperabat totum Josephum at tuus codex tantum tenet [?] historiam belli Judaici etc.[2] Bene vale. Friburgi, 3 cal. februarii, anno 1533.

[1] Alcyonius, a Venetian pupil of Musurus, professor of Greek at Florence, who died in 1527, either at or shortly after the sack of Rome. Allen, ii, p. 315.

[2] So in MS.

IV. De Pins to Erasmus.

Nîmes MS. 215, fol. 167. (*1533 or 1534.*)

Legit mihi nuper, suavissime, literas etc.[1] Josephum meum quem proximis annis tuo rogatu Frobenio misi, velim ad me remittendum cures, si ille satis commode usus fuerit. Sin minus expectabo ipse in tuam gratiam tantisper, vel quantocunque meo incommodo, dum ille suum commodum faciat. Vale. Tui honoris semper et nominis cupidissimus et amantissimus Pinus, Rivensis episcopus.

V. Erasmus to De Pins.

Nîmes MS. 215, fol. 169. FREIBURG, *Nov. 13, 1534.*

Erasmo Roterodamo.

Joanni Pino, episcopo Rivensi D. Erasmus S. P.

Quo pristinam erga me benevolentiam constanter obtines, ornatissime praesul, mihi quidem est, ut esse par est, gratissimum. Variis incommodis ad tolerantiam exerceor. Luterus in me scripsit epistolam simpliciter furiosam, ac tam improbe mendacem ut displiceat etiam Luteranissimis; minatur etiam atrociora. Nicolaus Herborn,[2] Franciscanus, com[missarius] generalis cismontanus, edidit sermones quadragesimales non in aliud nisi ut acerrimis conviciis me aspergeret. Sunt qui libellos famosos in me scriptos recitant, sed apud symmistas duntaxat, quorum de nostro erat Buschius qui nuper decessit. Nec minima pars molestiarum venit a famulis. Nuper sceleratissimam viperam fovi in sinu meo credens me habere fidelem ministrum; occideret me si posset impune. Accedit his senectus in dies magis ac magis ingravescens quae me nimium frequenter chyragra et podagra discruciat. Sic visum tamen[3] *οι οὐδὲ οἱ θεοὶ μάχονται.* Josephum tuum nunquam vidi. Scripsi Hieronymo, ut nuncio, qui tuas reddidit, tradat codicem, quod non dubito eum facturum. Ejus nomine tibi quoque gratias ago. Vale. Friburgi, 13 die novembris 1534. Erasmus Roterodamus, mea manu.

VI. Erasmus to De Pins.

Nîmes MS. 215, fol. 169. FREIBURG, *May 19, 1535.*

Johanni Pino, episcopo Rivensi, d. Erasmus R.

Reverendissime praesul, dederam cuidam theologo[4] negotium ut

[1] So in MS.

[2] Nicholas of Herborn in Nassau (1535) called Stagefyr in satire, after working in vain against the Reformation in Hesse, came to preach at Cologne in 1527. In his Lenten Sermons of 1530 he attacked Erasmus as more dangerous than Luther or Zwingli. See L. Schmitt: *Der Kölner Theologe Nik. Stagefyr und der Franziscaner Nik. Herborn.* 1896.

[3] Blank in MS. The whole Greek sentence is perhaps *Ἀνάγκη δ' οὐδὲ θεοὶ μάχονται*, from Simonides of Ceos, as handed down in Stobaeus, Eclog. I, 42C. This reference I owe to Professor H. de Forest Smith.

[4] Damian a Goes, see Erasmus's letter to him August 25, 1534. LB. ep. 1271.

Bononiae inquireret de Paulo Bombasio. Is scribit se a Bombasii fratre accepisse quod Romae interfectus sit a militibus Borbonicis.[1] Doleo tibi rem esse cum chiragra cum quo malo mihi iam biennium dira conflictatio est. Dominus te servet incolumen.

Friburgi, 19 die Maii, 1535. Erasmus Roterodamus, mea manu.

[1] *I.e.*, the Imperial army under Charles, Constable of Bourbon.

APPENDIX III

UNPUBLISHED POEMS OF ERASMUS AND GAGUIN

The British Museum contains an illuminated MS., Egerton 1651, with some poems and one letter of Erasmus, apparently all in contemporary copy, and most likely of the years 1499-1500. Some of these have been published, but there are still four unpublished. The contents of the MS. in detail is as follows.

1. Letter to Prince Henry of England, 1499, Allen, ep. 104.

Allen conjectures (iv. p. xxi) that this letter, and the poems were actually presented to Prince Henry, and he collates the letter, ibid., with the form late printed.

2. In laudem angelorum, printed LB. v, 1321.

3. De Michaele, *ibid.*

4. Gabrielis laus, *ibid.* 1323.

5. Raphaelis laus, *ibid.*

6. De angelis in genere, *ibid.* 1324.

7. Hendecasillabum carmen, LB. i, 1217.

8. In [annales] Ga[guini] et [eclogas] Fa[ustinas]. LB. i, 1217.

9. Carmen Extemporale.

This ode to Skelton was never published, perhaps because Skelton did not reciprocate with the eulogy of Erasmus evidently expected from him. See *ante*, p. 62.

Quid tibi facundum nostra in preconia fontem
Solvere collibuit,
Aeterna vates Skelton dignissime lauro
Castaldumque decus.
Nos neque Pieridum celebravimus antra sororum
Fonte nec Aonio;

Ebibimus vatum ditantes ora liquores
At tibi Apollo Chelim
Auratam debit, et vocalia plectra sorores.
Inque tuis labiis
Dulcior hybleo residet suadela liquore;
Se tibi Calliope
Infudit totam; tu carmine vincis olorem.
Cedit et ipse tibi
Ultro porrecta cithara Rhodopeius Orpheus.
Tu modulante lyra
Et mulcere feras et duras ducere quercus
Tu potes et rapidos
Flexanimis fidibus fluviorum sistere cursus;
Flectere saxa potes.
Grecia Meonio quantum debebat Homero
Mantua Virgilio
Tantum Skeltoni iam se debere fatetur
Terra Britanna suo.
Primus in hanc Latio deduxit ab orbe Camoenas,
Primus hic edocuit
Exculte pureque loqui. Te principe Skelton
Anglia nil metuat
Velcum Romanis versu certare poetis.
Vive valeque diu.

10. In Castigationes Vincentii contra Malleoli castigatoris depravationes.

This unpublished poem compares the excellent editorial and proof-reading work done by Augustine Vincent Caminade with the poor work, corrupting the text, done by a certain "Little Hammer." Vincent was a pupil of Erasmus in 1500; in that year preparing the *Adagia* for the press of John Philippi at Paris. Allen, i, p. 305, and epp. 131, 136, 156. It is difficult to conjecture who was the "Malleolus." No proper name among those known in Erasmus's writings can be exactly so translated. Possibly the man intended was Batt, a friend with whom Erasmus was in correspondence in 1500, and whose name might be translated as Malleolus.

Plus sibi quam Varo[1] volui Tucrique[2] licere
In musam sumit turba prophana meam.
Hic lacerat mutilatque; hic pannos assuit ostro;
Sordidior [et] mendis pagina nulla vacat.
Vel nuper quanta horrebam rubigine! Scabro
Malleolo vexor dum miser atque premor.
Hic sordes mihi dum male sedulus excutit auxit,
Dumque agitat veteres addidit ipse novas.
Reddidit ereptum Vincenti lima nitorem,
Ornavit variis insuper indicibus.
Vivat ut usque meus vindex vincentius opto;
Flagret malleolus Malleus ille malis!

11. Ad Gaguinem. LB. i, 1218.

12. Contestatio salvatoris ad hominem sua culpa pereuntem. Carminis futuri rudimenta.

This is a first draft of the poem later published in LB., v, 1319. As the printed form was much changed, however, the original may be reproduced here.

Quin mihi sunt uni, si quae bona terra polusque
Habet, quid hoc dementiae est
Ut malis homo falsa sequi bona? sed malva vera
Me rarus aut nemo petat?
Forma capit multos; me nil formosius usquam est;
Formam hanc amat nemo tamen.

[1] It is difficult to say what Varus is meant here. I conjecture that the person intended is Adolph of Veere, to whom Erasmus at one time intended to dedicate the *Adagia*. On him see Allen, i, p. 229.

[2] This word is very uncertain; in the MS., of which I have a photograph, it looks like "Tucceque." I believe that James Tutor is meant, Tucri standing for Tutori, as c and t are interchanged often in this MS., on whom see Allen, ep. 133, and i, p. 356. Tutor was a man for whom Erasmus had great respect. The meaning of the first two lines would then be: "The unlearned crowd arrogates to itself, against my Muse, more than I should be willing to allow even to Veere or to Tutor."

Sum clarissimus, et generosus utroque parente.
Servire nobis quur pudet?
Dives item et facilis dare multa et magna rogatus,
Rogari amo; nemo rogat.
Sumque vocorque patris summi sapiencia; nemo
Me consulit mortalium.
Preceptor: mihi nemo cupit parere neganti
Eternitas, nec expetor
Sum via quae sola caeli itur ad astra, tamen me
Terit viator infrequens.
Auctor quum ego sim vitae unicus, ipsaque vita
Quur sordet mortalibus?
Veraci credit nemo, fidit mihi nemo,
Quum sit nihil fidelius.
Sum placabilis ac misereri pronus, et ad nos
Vix confugit quisquam miser.
Denique justus ego vindexque severus iniqui,
Nostri metus vix ullum habet.
Proinde mei desertor homo; socordia si te
Adducet in mortem tua.
Praeteritum nihil est. In me ne rejici culpam;
Malorum es ipse auctor tibi.

13. In dive Anne laudem Rithmi iambici.
LB., v, 1325. The last 18 lines are omitted in the MS.

14. Ad Skeltonem carmen extemporale.
The first three lines of no. 9 above.

15. Epigramma Ga[guini].

The above poems were all by Erasmus. In addition to them there is one by Gaguin, which is not found in his published works. It is on folio 5b of the MS., between no. 7 and no. 8, above. See *ante*, pp. 29 f. The subject is Gaguin's welcome to Faustus Andrelinus and Erasmus at a dinner given by himself.

Faustus ades fauste spectatus Appoline vates
Nec minus advenias gratus, Herasme, comes.

Non vos accipiam pleno cratere bibaces;
  Vatibus apponi parcior esca solet.
Quamquam equidem mensa dignos meliore Gaguinus
  Estimat et divum promeruisse dapes.
Haud epulas tentum, quantum spectetis amici,
  Pectus et humane nimium amicitiae,
Ædes fortunae, tenuis cum veste supellex
  Cor animus vestris usibus ecce patent!

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA.

Page 289, note 1. Hroswitha found the plot of her drama "Phaphnutius and Thais" in an older legend, possibly dating back to the fifth century. See the Bollandists' *Acta Sanctorum* for Oct. 8, iv, 223 ff. But the parallels between Erasmus's Colloquy and Hroswitha seem to show that he borrowed from her.

Page 433. Karl Pearson's opinion of Erasmus and the Reformation seems to be partly dependent on that of Wieland, as reported in the *Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson*, ed. Sadler, 3 vols. 1869, i, 109.

Appendix III. In the Catalogue of Lucubrations (Allen, i, p. 3) Erasmus says that he had written every sort of poem, and had left some unpublished. Among his poems he mentions as a very early one the sapphic to Michael the Archangel, which he wrote at the request of an official in a church dedicated to Michael—the legend of Raphael as "set over all the diseases and wounds of the children of men," goes back to the Book of Enoch, xl, 9.

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